THE FIRM

Based on the novel
by
John Grisham

(November 2, 1992)

Screenplay by

Robert Towne & David Rayfiel

1 EXT HARVARD CAMPUS - CAMBRIDGE - DAY 1

Early morning. Students rushing to classes. The SOUND of a BASKETBALL SLAMMING against the wood floor of a court.

2 INT GYM - DAY 2

MITCH McDEERE, in gray gym shorts plays fierce two-on-two basketball. It's an oddball quartet. Mitch is teamed with a pot-bellied REDHEAD in his 30's. They are playing a large, MUSCULAR BLACK MAN in his 40's and a SPARE BUT FIT MAN in his early 60's.

The Black Man drives into the paint, Mitch all over him. He fakes, passes to the Elderly Man, who goes over the Redhead for the score.

MITCH
Son of a bitch!
(immediately mortified)
I mean your Honor, that was a hell of a shot.

Laughter. The wall clock buzzes. It's 8:30.

3 INT FEDERAL COURTROOM DOOR - DAY 3

In troops the quartet. The Black Man in bailiff uniform with sidearm, the Redhead the court attendant, Mitch, in worn suit & tie, moves to the clerk's table, the Elderly Man in robes ascends to the bench.

BAILIFF
Oyez, oyez, oyez, the United States Court for the district of Massachusetts is now in session, the honorable Brian J. Hookstratten presiding.

4 EXT HARVARD CAMPUS - MITCH - DAY 4

dashes across a common, loaded with books.

MITCH (V.O.)
--I'm currently doing an externship for two credits as clerk for Judge Hookstratten --

5 INT CAMPUS BLDG - CLOSE - BULLETIN BOARD - DAY 5

A large notice: RECRUITING WEEK April 1-7. Below lists of the various law firms participating.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: 5

RECRUITER (V.O.)
BJ Hookstratten? That's more impressive than being in the top five percent --

6 INT CLASS ROOM - MITCH AND TWO LAWYERS - DAY 6

They face each other in a sea of empty chairs.

RECRUITER (CONT'D)
(continuing)
-- look I don't know what kind of offers you've had from Wall Street --

MITCH
(embarrassed)
--the top five sir. In my class. Not the top five percent. Sorry. I just felt I should --

Mitch glances at his watch.

LAWYER #2
Mr. McDeere we've just offered you sixty-eight thousand dollars a year from, arguably, the leading law firm in Chicago. Is there somewhere else you have to be?

MITCH
Yes sir. I have a job. I'm just on lunch break and I need-

7 INT CAMPUS RESTAURANT - DUSK 7

Mitch, jeans and sweater, carries a tray of food through the crowd of handsome students and their girlfriends. He serves one table, takes an order from another.

2'D RECRUITER (V.O.)
--we have 127 clients that are Fortune 500 companies. We'll offer you seventy-four thousand dollars and --

8 INT - CLOSE ANOTHER RECRUITER - DAY 8

3D RECRUITER
--our billing requirements are only two thousand hours the first year, not the usual twenty-five hundred. We want you to have a life outside the office, Mitch. And if you're a Lakers fan --

9 EXT MOVING POV - THROUGH BUS WINDOW - DOWNTOWN BOSTON - DAY 9

Approaching the limos in front of the Copley-Plaza Hotel.

ANOTHER RECRUITER (V.O.
--forget it. With your ability and ambition there's only one place for you and that's with us in Washington D.C. --

10 EXT - BUS STOP - NEAR COPLEY-PLAZA - MITCH - DAY 10

He gets off the bus and approaches the elegant hotel. The plush burgundy awnings and solid gray stone are impressive. Mitch's concession to it is just a hitch in his stride to straighten his tie, check his cuffs and shoes.

11 INT COPLEY-PLAZA - ATRIUM - DOLLYING SHOT 11

moving along the magnificent vaulted gold ceiling and glittering chandeliers.

12 INT - LOBBY - MITCH & CONCIERGE - FULL ANGLE 12

As he gawks at the elegance around him.

13 INT - SUITE DOOR - DAY 13

It opens and LAMAR QUINN, perfectly tailored, only a few years older than Mitch fills the doorway. He breaks into a smile as if he'd just recognized an old friend.

LAMAR
Mitchell McDeere?

MITCH
Yes.

LAMAR
Nice to meet you, I'm Lamar Quinn.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: 13

They shake hands violently as Lamar leads Mitch inside.

LAMAR (CONT'D)
--this is Oliver Lambert our senior partner, and Royce McKnight our managing partner. Have a seat.

They all sit. Oliver, late sixties, is mellow and professorial. McKnight, fifties, cool and detached reminds one of McNamara. Lamar is a little too obliged to smile whenever Mitch looks at him.

OLIVER
Care for a drink, Mitch?

On a serving cart are rows of mineral water bottles, coffee, tea, fruit & cheese. No liquor.

MITCH
I'm fine.

The three men look at Mitch, who stares pleasantly back, hands folded, feet on the floor.

OLIVER
Tired of interviews?

MITCH
No sir. I just don't quite know what to say.

MCKNIGHT
Unusual for a lawyer.

MITCH
Oh, I can get tongue-tied in any number of situations. But they're usually with my wife.

Laughter.

OLIVER
Would you mind describing one? With your wife.

An awkward moment. They wait.

MITCH
Well...the first time I saw her...anytime we argue... whenever she walks into a room, as a matter of fact.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (2) 13

Oliver nods appreciatively, smiles -- then:

OLIVER
Might we ask about the rest of your family?

MITCH
(grudgingly)
...My father was killed in the coal mines. My mother remarried and lives in Florida.

MCKNIGHT
Brothers and sisters?

MITCH
An older brother...Ray...
(at their silence)
He..kind of raised me.

MCKINGHT
And what does he do?

MITCH
--we've lost touch.

OLIVER
(gently but firmly)
Mitch, I hope you don't think us intrusive but stability in the family has a special importance for us. Bendini, Lambert & Locke is just a small Memphis <u>firm</u>, thirty-one lawyers, but we're a large <u>family</u>. So we're careful.

MCKNIGHT
What first drew our attention was your Harvard Law Rebiew piece on Capital Gains Reduction in Maritime Commerce...an imaginative grasp of the implications.

MITCH
(surprised)
Thank you.

OLIVER
You should know as well that since we deal primarily in tax and securities, our clients are very wealthy.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (3) 13

OLIVER (Cont'd)
Poor people rarely have tax problems; it's one of the few advantages of being poor.
(then playfully:)
Now, sir, do you have any questions for us?

MITCH
(in kind)
Do you have an offer in mind?

McKnight places a sealed envelope on the coffee table.

MCKNIGHT
It includes a bonus schedule, a low-interest mortgage so you can buy a home, a country club membership, and we'd lease you a new Mercedes.

LAMAR
You pick the color, Mitch.

OLIVER
Lamar you haven't been paying attention. His wife picks the color.

Mitch, somewhat bewildered, looks at the envelope.

MITCH
Do I open it here?

MCKNIGHT
Of course.

OLIVER
...Unless you can tell us what's in it.

Rayce and Lamar look curious. Mitch smiles.

OLIVER(CONT'D)
A lawyer worth that offer - shouldn't have to open the envelope.

Mitch looks down at the envelope, looks at the three men.

MITCH
Mr. McKnight, you are the managing partner at Bendini, Lambert & Locke, is that correct?

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED: (4) 13

MCKNIGHT
Yes.

MITCH
Did Mr. Lambert, as senior partner, give you any instructions regarding my employment?

MCKNIGHT
He did.

MITCH
And do you usually follow Mr. Lambert's instructions?

LAMAR
Objection. Vague, ambiguous--

OLIVER
Sustained.

MITCH
What, precisely, were those instructions?

MCKNIGHT
That you were in great demand and that I should make certain we obtain your services before a bidding situation developed.

MITCH
And how would you go about 'making certain'?

MCKNIGHT
I would bribe the clerk in the Harvard Law Placement Office for the exact amount of the highest offer -- and then add twenty percent.

Mitch stares incredulously at the envelope.

OLIVER
The letter you got from Bendini, Lambert & Locke was the only one sent out. We want you, Mitch.

14 EXT STREET - AN ANCIENT MAZDA HATCHBACK - EVENING 14

hubcaps rattling, wedges its way into a parking space between a new Porsche and a 360 SL with Boston University stickers and decals.

Behind the cracked windshield sits ABBY McDEERE, a breath-taking young woman in her twenties. She finishes wrestling the car into the spot, switches off the ignition and groans -- this is obviously a daily ritual.

She eyes the door handle with sudden malice, yanks it, shoulders it open and gets out, spilling her school gear.

The street is peppered with more shiny sportcars of the collegiate wealthy.

15 EXT RUNDOWN APARTMENT UNIT - ABBY - EVENING 15

She stands outside her door fumbling for her keys when, suddenly, the door is jerked open and she's yanked inside!

16 INT MCDEERE APARTMENT - MITCH & ABBY - EVENING 16

He throws her onto the sofa, leggos and colored pipe cleaners flying everywhere. He attacks her neck and face, kissing her madly, finally locking her in a long sweet embrace.

ABBY
OK, you'll have to leave now, I'm expecting my husband.

MITCH
The hell with him, come here-

HEARSAY, their mutt jumps up as Mitch pulls Abby to her feet and leads her to the candle-lit kitchen table.

MITCH(CONT'D)
Moo Shoo Pork, Szechwan Beef and Mandarin Duck. From Wong Boys.

Framed between the white food cartons and a bottle of Chardonnay is the envelope from the interview. Dazzled, she picks up the wine bottle.

MITCH
It's even got a cork.

He begins to serve from the food cartons.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 16

MITCH
Remember that firm in Memphis I got a letter from about a month ago?

ABBY
Memphis??

MITCH
That's what I thought until their offer.

He picks up the corkscrew, she's vaguely suspicious.

ABBY
What was the offer?

MITCH
They didn't say.
(points)
It's in there.

ABBY
It's sealed.

MITCH
(pouring wine)
I guessed.

ABBY
...You 'guessed??'

MITCH
Yeah, but I'm a good guesser.

She opens the envelope, stares dumbly at the numbers.

MITCH(CONT'D)
--plus a five percent increase the second year--

ABBY
--why?

MITCH
'Why'?? Who's side are you on?

She hugs him.

ABBY
...yours.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2) 16

MITCH
Plus bonuses-- plus a low-interest mortgage.

ABBY
...as in home? with grass around it?

MITCH
--and a two car garage.

She stares at him. A soft, sassy, insistent blues FADES IN.

ABBY
But why, really, Mitch?--

MITCH
--so we can park the Mercedes.

17 EXT - AERIAL SHOT - MEMPHIS TENNESSEE - DAY 17

BLUES UP FULL as CAMERA PANS from Beale Street, across the new trolley tracks and over to Court Square, bordered by the Federal Buildings. A sleek, black limousine moves through.

MITCH'S VOICE
They want to fly us down for a little visit.

18 EXT/INT - LIMOUSINE - MITCH AND ABBY - DAY 18

Elegant, as it glides through the downtown streets. In the plush back seat Mitch tries for nonchalance, but it's a tough go. Abby watches Mitch with amusement as his eyes flick over the crystal decanters, the telephone, and the television set.

ABBY
You been in one limo, you been in them all--

The Limo drops her in front of the Peabody hotel. Mitch kisses her.

19 EXT - BENDINI BUILDING - DAY 19

Cotton Trucks move by as the limo pulls up in front of the imposing facade. Mitch gets out and moves inside.

20 INT - BENDINI BUILDING - LOBBY - MITCH & LAMAR - DAY 20

As Lamar greets Mitch, pointing to a billboard in the center of the marble lobby that greets 'MITCHELL Y.MCDEERE, The guest of the day'.

LAMAR
Come on - associates first, then lunch with the partners in our private dining room.

21 INT LAW LIBRARY - THE FIRM - DAY 21

TILTING DOWN the crushing weight of floor to ceiling volumes of law books we come to TWO DOZEN YOUNG MEN, impeccably turned out, most not much older than Mitch. These are the ASSOCIATES.

OLIVER'S VOICE
--he's our number one draft pick so to speak, and he's being romanced by the big boys in New York and Chicago and everywhere else, so we have to sell him on our little firm here in Memphis-

22 INT - THE FIRM - CLOSE - MITCH AND OLIVER 22

OLIVER
- meanwhile he's going to try not to be embarrassed while I remind you that he's about to graduate from Harvard with honors -

HARVARD MEN
Hear, hear -

ANGLE SHIFTS to SEE that Mitch and Oliver are now in the plush PARTNER'S dining room overlooking the river, their audience now the older partners just finishing their meal and listening attentively.

OLIVER
-yes, yes, Jerry, we know you went to Harvard.

General levity, as the sassy, insistent BLUES FADES UP again.

23 EXT BEALE STREET - NIGHT 23

Mitch, Abby, Lamar and KAY QUINN, Lamar's cheerful wife stroll through a happy crowd along the neon-lit street. A cacophony of RAUCOUS BLUES floats in and out. Lamar and Mitch are in front out of earshot and TALK ONLY TO EACH OTHER.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 23

Kay and Abby walk behind and SPEAK ONLY TO EACH OTHER. THE FOLLOWING IS SIMULTANEOUS CONVERSTION:

MITCH
No divorce in a law firm?

ABBY
Impossible.

KAY
No bachelors either.

ABBY
How about women?

KAY
They had one once -

LAMAR
-Alice Krauss. Wobbled around on four inch heels -- affirmative action on stilts.

ANOTHER ANGLE - BEALE STREET - LONG LENS - NIGHT

HAWKERS sell T-shirts. DOORMEN try to entice customers into the music joints.

KAY
In fact they don't want anyone with family money.

ABBY
I'm not sure I follow...?

KAY
They want you lean and hungry. If all your money comes from one source, you tend to be very loyal to that source.

24 INT B.B. KINGS - NIGHT 24

The champ of Memphis Blues WAILS on the small stage in the packed room. The crowd is enthusiastic. Mitch, Abby, Lamar and Kay are huddled at a tiny table. They shout to be heard above the music.

KAY
--she can show you several houses in your price range.

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED: 24

ABBY
...What is our price range?

25 EXT - LAMBERT HOME - WIDE VIEW - LATE AFTERNOON 25

The barbecue is set under paper lanterns, lit even in daylight, on a lawn rolling down to a glassy lake. At the buffet a few GUESTS are queued up, while OTHERS dine at small tables. Most of the guests wander and chat.

A BAND plays energetically on a makeshift platform, as waiters and waitresses holding trays laden with hors d'oeuvres pass by in foreground.

A LONG VIEW over the shoulders of a line of several elderly, elegant women, as Kay introduces Abby.

ANOTHER ANGLE - OLIVER AND MITCH

Oliver strolls with his arm around Mitch's shoulders.

OLIVER
It's different from the northeast, the pace, we're--
(smiles)
almost stately by comparison. Courteous. And not as gossipy. We keep each other's secrets.

MITCH
I like that.

OLIVER
...What do you like about it?

MITCH
All of it. It's a family, just the way you said.

ANOTHER ANGLE - ABBY AND KAY

Moving along the lake.

ABBY
- for the last three years I've been teaching in the Boston area at a private school. Do you work?

KAY
(laughing)
Not since I put Lamar through law school. But working isn't forbidden.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 25

ABBY
...'Forbidden?'

KAY
Working. By the firm, you know.

ABBY
How could it be forbidden?

KAY
It isn't. Anyway, two babies in fourteen months and I had all the work I could handle.
(beat)
You plan to start a family?

ABBY
Maybe in a couple of years.

KAY
The firm encourages children.

ABBY
...How do they do that exactly?

CLOSE SHOT - HORSESHOE PIT - NIGHT

The CLANG of a perfect shot. PULL BACK to see Mitch, his coat off, holding a beer in one hand, horseshoe in the other. He pitches again. Cheers as he makes a good shot.

Oliver lights Mitch's cigar as a waiter carries a gleaming humidor to other guests.

NEAR THE LAKE, Abby is alone a moment, looking out over the lake. Then Mitch steps into shot. He spreads his arms.

MITCH
How about it?

ABBY
--How about it.

MITCH
OK...The Love Boat Band, the secret recipe ribs -- they're a little square, maybe-

ABBY
I don't mind square, I like square, weird, I mind.

MITCH
What do you mean - weird?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2) 25

ABBY
Well, here's a quote: The Firm does not 'forbid' me to take a job; and they 'encourage' children-- ask me why.

MITCH
--because they love kids?

ABBY
-because children 'promote stability.' Want to hear more?

MITCH
No, no, you're right,

He moves past her directly toward the water.

MITCH (CONT'D)
Don't pay any attention I'm just going to throw myself in the river-- I think my will is self-explanatory.

ABBY
That's a lake...

He stops, turns back, takes her in his arms.

MITCH
These are nice people, Abby. OK, I'm more impressed with it than you are - you grew up with it. You know what ninety-six thousand dollars a year is here? it's like a hundred and fifty in New York. Did you ever think I'd make a six figure salary?

ABBY
Absolutely.

MITCH
-- You did??
(at her look)
Well...listen, your folks are only a few hours away too.

ABBY
You mean if we fight, I won't have far to drive.

Mitch and Abby, small figures embracing at the bottom of the rolling lawn by the great river. OVER THIS WE HEAR:

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (3) 25

MAN'S VOICE
...she made 2 phone calls from the hotel, one to her parents, one to the Memphis school board.

26 INT THE FIRM - OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY 26

Oliver, McKnight, and NATHAN LOCKE, an intense, older man with white hair and dark eyebrows, listen to a strong looking man in his 50's, dressed less fashionably than the others. He is WILLIAM DEVASHER.

OLIVER
She seemed a little reluctant. I'd hate to lose this young man.

DEVASHER
I believe she'll come around.

MCKNIGHT
What about Kozinski and Hodge? Have you spoken with Chicago?

DEVASHER
....Yes.

27 INT BOSTON SCHOOLROOM - DAY 27

SIXTEEN second-graders sit solemnly at their chairs. Abby stands before her desk. One YOUNG BOY walks forward carrying a ribbon-wrapped roll of heavy paper.

He solemnly hands it to her. She unties the ribbon, unrolls the paper on her desk.

It is a hand-drawn map of the Eastern United States. A bright red line marks the route from Boston to Memphis. 'Have a Happy Journey!' is scrawled at the bottom and it's signed by all the class. PUSH IN TO THE MAP.

28 EXT - TRAVELING SHOT - U-HAUL TRAILER - DAY 28

Mitch and Abby, crammed in with belongings and Hearsay, turn off a boulevard onto a pleasant street of well-tended houses. Sprinklers, flower gardens. A kind of American dream.

29 INT - THE CAR - MITCH & ABBY - DAY 29

Looking around. Abby peers over her sunglasses.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 29

MITCH
Is that it?

ABBY
It looks...different.

30 EXT - THE HOUSE - DAY 30

Quiet, landscaped, flowers in bloom. The car and trailer shudder to a stop. In the silence, Mitch and Abby get out, followed by Hearsay. They approach the house.

Mitch stops, staring off toward a DARK BLUE MERCEDES CONVERTIBLE with beige leather upholstery nestled under a carport. He goes to the car and runs his finger along the gleaming hood.

MITCH
Nice, huh?

ABBY
...Where's yours?

31 INT THE HOUSE - DAY 31

It's been sparsely, but very nicely furnished. A voluptuous fruit & cheese basket awaits them on the table beside a chilled bottle of champagne. Mitch takes the note from the basket.

MITCH
It says they've taken the liberty of furnishing it-- temporarily -- with just a few things. Hope we don't mind.

32 INT KITCHEN - DAY 32

Stainless steel refrigerator and range. Polished floor. Light streams in from the windows as Abby looks around.

33 EXT HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY 33

LONG VIEW across the manicured lawn as Mitch comes out with Hearsay, who moves cautiously, curiously at first -- then bounds happily around the perfect green carpet.

34 INT THE HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY 34

Glowing marble, soft towels, mirrored walls reflecting Abby as Mitch comes in, embraces her from behind.

35 EXT - SUBURBAN ROADS - MERCEDES - DUSK 35

racing along, windows down, Hearsay's nose to the wind that tears at Abby and Mitch's clothes. Their faces are happy.

36 INT BEDROOM - CLOSE RADIO ALARM - DAWN 36

It reads 4:45. The cheerful southern VOICE of the announcer comes in over raucous music. Mitch bolts up, shuts off the alarm. Abby moans. He strokes her forehead.

MITCH
Don't get up.

ABBY
...don't worry.

37 INT BATHROOM - MITCH - DAWN 37

Turns on the light. There's a brand new butterleather briefcase on the counter wrapped in silver ribbon.

Mitch reads the card: 'For your first day, and forever. Always, A -'

Beaming, Mitch reaches up, takes a new suit that he'd placed on a hanger the night before.

38 EXT BENDINI BLDG - EARLY LIGHT 38

The stone facade catches the sun's first rays as Mitch's Mercedes pulls up to the parking gate. Mitch holds a plastic card out, as A GUARD with a clipboard steps forward.

MITCH
Mitch McDeere.

GUARD
Tad eager, are we, Mr. McDeere?

Mitch shrugs, smiles sheepishly as he pulls forward.

39 INT BENDINI BUILDING - MITCH - EARLY MORNING 39

Empty. Quiet. He moves slowly down the corridor, past the empty, closed offices. There is an open doorway halfway down the corridor next to a closed one marked JOSEPH HODGE.

Inside, Locke and Devasher are going through documents in the desk and files.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED: 39

Devasher suddenly looks up and sees Mitch. Mitch starts to smile and say something, but Devasher's blank stare stops him. For an odd moment the two men just stare at one another, then Devasher uses his foot to push the door closed and the floor is quiet again. The name on the door is MARTIN KOZINSKI.

Mitch continues down the hall into the large, dark library.

He finds the light switches, turns them on. He's a small figure, in the huge, elegant room, beneath the tower of books. He touches the surface of the table, places his briefcase carefully, ritualistically, on it, and sits down.

40 INT LIBRARY - LATER 40

Lamar bursts in. Mitch, at the table, is buried in volumes.

LAMAR
What do you think you're doing? Dutch says you've been here since 6:30.

MITCH
Thought I'd jump start the bar exam work --

LAMAR
Good. No associate has ever failed the bar exam. Come on.

41 INT 2D FLOOR HALLWAY - LAMAR AND MITCH -DAY 41

Arriving lawyers and secretaries interrupt the following:

LAMAR
You'll have your hands full between the bar exam and your Mentor.
(at Mitch's look)
One of the partners is assigned to each new associate to act as a mentor...yours is Avery Tolar.

MITCH
...Yeah?

LAMAR
(carefully)
He's the youngest partner. Into high risk tax shelters...takes a lot of chances. Shoots first - fights with the IRS later.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: 41

MITCH
Does he win?

LAMAR
Almost invariably -- Say hello to your secretary.

CLOSE on a heavyset woman in her late 40's.

WOMAN
- Nina Huff--you'll want to start studying immediately. No associate has ever failed the bar exam -- now what's your wife's name and how do you like your coffee?

42 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - CLOSE ATTORNEY - DAY 42

He hands Mitch a huge 3-ring binder.

ATTORNEY
Wally Hudson, contracts. Here to help with the bar exam -

MITCH
Thanks Wally.

WALLY
No associate in the history of the firm has ever failed the bar exam --

MITCH
No kidding.

43 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - CLOSE RANDALL DUNBAR - DAY 43

Another attorney. Another huge 3-ring notebook.

RANDALL
--first day's a four hour multiple choice on ethics. Look at the first six chapters, I'll see you Wednesday 9:45. No associate in the firm has ever-

44 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - A THIRD ATTORNEY - DAY 44

ATTORNEY #3
--domestic relations --

45 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - A FOURTH ATTORNEY - DAY 45

ATTORNEY #4
--wills, estates --

46 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - CLOSE MITCH - DAY 46

Buried in books. He glances up, flinches, prepared to have another book hurled at him. Instead the MAN in the doorway, merely stares, amused.

Conservative Armani and briefcase, but even at a glance there's an air about him that suggests something reckless.

MITCH
I'm sorry, can I help you?

AVERY
I think I'm here to help you, actually. I'm Avery Tolar, your designated mentor. Let's go to lunch.

MITCH
Lunch? But it's --

AVERY
Not even noon. Yes, I know.
(amused reassurance)
It'll be a working lunch.

47 INT RECEPTION AREA - THE FIRM - OMIT 47

48 EXT COURT SQUARE PARK - DAY 48

Avery and Mitch walk through the peaceful park. People sit on benches reading newspapers, eating brown-bag lunches.

AVERY
Promotions, raises, bonuses, survival, everything depends on billing. You bill a client an hour for any fraction of an hour you spend thinking about him.

MITCH
No half hours?

AVERY
You just give us the time sheets, the office manager'll worry about the billing.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED: 48

Avery's pulled a handful of peanuts from his tailored suit pocket and is feeding the pigeons.

AVERY (CONT'D)
My particular field is --

MITCH
--forming limited partnerships through offshore corporations, mainly in the Cayman Islands.

AVERY
...Good. I want you to review the last deal I made for one of our clients, Sonny Capps. He earned over 14 million last year, paid less than six-hundred thousand in taxes and feels -- quite resentful. But he paid us over half a million in fees and I don't want to lose him. Take a look at our offshore opinion letter and see if you can come up with anything.

MITCH
What do you mean by 'anything'?

AVERY
I'm not talking about breaking the law.

MITCH
(beat)
Sure. But you're the risk-taker, how far you want it bent?

AVERY
As far as you can without breaking it.

49 INT MANHATTAN CLUB - DAY 49

Plush, low-key, few customers this early, but those there look prominent. In foreground, a MATIRE D' is seating Mitch and Avery at a prominent table. A WAITER hovers just out of earshot.

AVERY
Something before lunch? I should warn you the firm frowns on drinking during office hours.

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: 49

WAITER
Yes, gentlemen?

MITCH
Iced tea, please.

AVERY
Bombay martini on the rocks, Ellis, three olives.
(to Mitch)
I'm allowed a few minor rebellions.

50 INT MCDEERE HOME - DAY 50

Telephone and tv installers are drilling and laying phone and cable lines. Men from a security system are placing control boxes into the walls.

Two men are unrolling a large rug. Kay Quinn is trying to help Abby place tv's, outlets, etc. Hearsay is barking at all the strangers.

ABBY
Kay, please, I've never had so many people trying to do things for me.

KAY
It's the South, Abby.

ABBY
That's no excuse.

WORKMAN
Would you like your phone programmed for speed dialing, ma'am?

ABBY
Oh, well, other than my husband's office number -- let's see it's --

2D WORKMAN
We have it, Mrs. McDeere. We do the installations for the firm.

51 INT - MANHATTAN CLUB - AVERY & MITCH 51

Remains of lunch. Avery finishing he drink.

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: 51

AVERY
What led you to law school?

MITCH
...I can't remember really--

AVERY
Sure you can, counselor.

MITCH
...I was a delivery boy for a pizza parlor. One day the owner got a notice from the IRS. He was an immigrant, didn't know much English, even less about withholding tax. He went bankrupt, lost his store. That was the first time I thought about being a lawyer.

AVERY
In other words you're an idealist.

MITCH
I don't know any tax lawyer who's an idealist. When he lost his store I lost my job. It scared me.

Avery waits for more. Instead:

MITCH (CONT'D)
What about you? What made you go to law school?

AVERY
I don't think I can remember that far back.

MITCH
Sure you can, Counselor

AVERY
(amused at Mitch)
.. I used to caddy for young lawyers -- off from work on weekdays-- and their wives. I'd look at those long, tan legs, and I just knew I had to be a lawyer.
(beat)
The wives had long tan legs too.
(to waiter)
Ellis? another martini please.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED: (2) 51

AVERY (Cont'd)
(then)
I've got to get you to my tailor.

52 EXT QUINN HOME - CHICKASAW GARDENS - DUSK 52

Mitch & Abby's Mercedes arrives and Mitch helps Abby out of the car. As they walk up to the house.

ABBY
--but what he's really saying is that they want to try me out by letting me substitute first for a few days to see how I do.

At the doorway, Mitch checks his watch. The front door opens, and an unsmiling MAID ushers them in quietly.

53 INT QUINN HOME - DUSK 53

The house is dark and quiet as the subdued Maid leads Mitch and Abby to the living room.

MAID
I'll let Mrs. Quinn know you are here.

She leaves. Mitch and Abby look at each other curiously.

ABBY
You sure it's tonight?

At that moment Kay Quinn walks in. Her eyes are puffy and she holds a handkerchief over her mouth.

ABBY
Kay...?

KAY
(fighting tears)
There's been...Marty Kozinski and Joe Hodge were killed. We just got word twenty minutes ago... Did you meet them at the barbecue?

MITCH
What happened Kay?

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: 53

KAY
(shaking)
We're not sure. They were diving off Grand Cayman. There was some kind of explosion on the boat...

54 EXT BACKYARD - QUINN HOME - DUSK 54

Lamar sits in a white deck chair near the pool. A rainbird arcs back and forth hypnotically. Mitch moves past a barbecue, its coals dying, and across the yard to Lamar.

An unopened Heineken sits on the deck beside him. Lamar's slacks are soaked. The spray from the rainbird rhythmically 'splats' over his lower legs, his shoes, and the unopened bottle. He seems unaware of it.

A silence. Then:

MITCH
...Lamar?

LAMAR
Marty was...his twin girls are a month older than our son ...

MITCH
I'm very sorry Lamar.

Another silence. Lamar stares into the distance.

LAMAR
Oh...Oliver wanted me to tell you that... you shouldn't be burdened with a student loan.

MITCH
--Excuse me?

LAMAR
If you bring the papers in tomorrow -- the firm'll repay it for you.

Mitch stares at Lamar's leg where the rainbird continues to drench it.

55 EXT/INT - MERCEDES - MITCH & ABBY - NIGHT 55

They drive in silence a moment.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: 55

ABBY
Kay was scared.

MITCH
What?...she was upset.

ABBY
There's a difference between being upset and being scared.

MITCH
Come on...do you know her that well?

Abby shivers, puts her arm around Mitch's neck, lays her head back on the seat.

ABBY
Maybe not.
(beat)
But I've spent a lot of time with her.
(beat)
They have their own quarter horses.
(beat)
Two of them.

Silence.

MITCH
Does that make half a horse?

A beat. Then they get hysterical. They can't stop laughing.

ABBY
(gasping)
We are bad...

56 EXT CEMETERY - CLOSE COFFIN - DAY 56

It's shiny surface reflects the sky. The VOICE of a Minister droning the final words of the service CROSS FADES with Mitch and Abby's LAUGHTER.

ANGLE SHIFTS to see Avery looking at Abby. Abby glances up and catches his look. She looks back toward the minister.

57 EXT CEMETERY - HIGH ANGLE - DAY 57

As the crowd disperses Oliver walks over, puts his arm paternally around Mitch. Avery moves up alongside Abby and extends a hand toward her.

AVERY
Mrs. McDeere, I'm Avery Tolar.

ABBY
Ah...you're the reason I see so little of my husband these days.

AVERY
I was looking at you and thinking....your husband is the most disciplined man I've ever met.

ABBY
He always has been.

AVERY
No..I mean, somehow he manages to leave you and go to an office every...day.

She looks at him a moment.

ABBY
I'm sure you could manage it.

A colleague pulls him off. She moves forward, catches up to Mitch as Oliver moves off with McKnight.

MITCH
What was Avery talking about?

ABBY
...He was complimenting you.

She kisses him, moves off toward Kay. In the bg, the gravediggers move forward and begin to dismantle the funeral bier.

58 MONTAGE - DAY 58

A. Mitch's office: An exquisite cherrywood desk is put in place.

B. School Classroom. Abby writing on the blackboard, "My name is Abigail McDeere."

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: 58

C. Mitch's office. An Early American painting being carefully hung on the wall.

D. Mitch's face watching luxurious items put in place in the office.

E. Tailor shop. Through the window we see Mitch being fitted in new clothes. Avery, arms folded, watches.

F. The Firm. Mitch at the huge library table, pouring over various volumes.

G. McDeere House. Abby, propped up in bed alone, grading papers.

H. Mitch's fingers as he runs them along the leaded panes of an imposing breakfront.

I. Mitch's office -- transformed. Oliver beams at Mitch, behind his exquisite desk, in his perfect office.

K. McDeere house. Night. Mitch rushes in, looks for Abby. Hearsay comes bounding up, jumps on Mitch.

Mitch notices a note wrapped around his collar. He unrolls it. WE SEE it reads: GAVE UP WAITING. SHARE BOWL OF KIBBLE WITH BEARER OF NOTE. YOUR FIRST WIFE - ABBY.

59 INT THE FIRM - MITCH'S OFFICE - DAY. 59

Mitch is buried in books when Avery, very up, good spirits, appears at the door.

AVERY
Hell of a proposal kiddo. Just redraft the section on repatriation of offshore funds and get it back to me tomorrow.

MITCH
Avery, I need another week.

AVERY
Can't have it, pal - you and I are flying to the Caymans tomorrow morning to take on Mr. Capps personally.

He starts away. Mitch is exasperated.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: 59

MITCH
But the bar exam!

60 INT MCDEERE HOUSE - KITCHEN - ABBY - NIGHT 60

Phone to her ear. The table is set for dinner, food is cooking on the stove, candles wait to be lit. She hangs up the phone -- blows out the candles, pours herself a glass of wine.

61 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - NIGHT 61

Mitch at his computer. His desk is a mess. Piles of the 3-ring binders, yellow pads, and folders of the Capps file. The B.L & L opinion letter is FEATURED. Nina sticks her head in.

NINA
Shall I stay, Mr. McDeere? Would you like me to pick you up a sandwich?

MITCH
What?...oh, no, Nina, thanks, go on home.

62 EXT DOE'S STEAK PLACE - BEALE STREET - NIGHT 62

Gaudy neon shines through the slatted windows. Inside we see Mitch at a formica table, book opened, scribbling on a legal pad. The place is empty except for two men sitting at a table adjacent to Mitch. A clock on the wall says 11:00.

63 INT DOE'S PLACE - MITCH - NIGHT 63

Without looking he reaches for his coffee.

A VOICE
What's good here?

Mitch looks up. A TALL MAN (Tarrance) in his thirties sits at the next table with a shorter WELL BUILT BLACK MAN (Richie). Mitch looks back to his work.

MITCH
I'm just having coffee.

TARRANCE
I'm going with the steak sandwich.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: 63

RICHIE
(calling)
Two steak sandwiches - rye, here.

TARRANCE
You with Bendini, Lambert and Locke?

MITCH
Yeah how'd you --

The Tall Man points to one of the law books with the firms name clearly visible. Mitch laughs, sheepish.

MITCH(CONT'D)
Sorry, I'm just-

RICHIE
Looks like they're working you to death.

MITCH
(a little punchy)
They do that with new associates, I guess. I've just been with them --

TARRANCE
--eight weeks.

This brings Mitch up short.

MITCH
Look guys, I'm a little dopey-

RICHIE
That firm looks like a health hazard --

TARRANCE
Hours they make you keep.

RICHIE
Kind of work they make you do.

TARRANCE
(to his partner)
-- Kozinski and Hodge.

RICHIE
-- Bob Lamm and Alice Krauss--

TARRANCE
That's four dead lawyers out of thirty-one in less then ten years.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (2) 63

RICHIE
-- And none of them over the age of forty-five. Knocks the bejeezus out of any life insurance tables I ever heard about.

MITCH
... Who are you guys?

Waiter arrives with the sandwiches. The Tall man looks up:

TARRANCE
Could we have 'em to go?

WAITER
Now you tell me?

He goes.

TARRANCE
We'll probably see each other again.

They rise and go out of SHOT. Mitch is very still.

64 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - NIGHT 64

Mitch moves to his desk, opens the Capps folder, but he's too preoccupied to concentrate. He gets up.

65 INT THE FIRM - LIBRARY - NIGHT 65

Dim light spilling from the hall half-illuminates a portrait of ROBERT LAMM, the dates 1939-1982 below it.

CAMERA PANS to a portrait of the one woman, ALICE KRAUSS. The dates read 1948-1988.

CAMERA REVEALS Mitch staring at the portraits. He moves farther down the wall and stops before the portraits of Joe Hodge and Marty Kozinski. He stares at the current dates.

A VOICE
What are you doing?

Mitch turns sharply. Locke stands in the dark doorway.

MITCH
I don't know, I was...well, between Mr.Tolar and the bar exam, anything's a diversion right now, even tragedy -- you're Mr. Locke.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED: 65

LOCKE
What will be a real tragedy is if you don't pass the bar exam.

MITCH
Yes sir.

LOCKE
You're a good boy. I hope you'll be with the firm for a long, long time. Go back to work or get some sleep.

MITCH
Yes sir, thank you.

66 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - CLOSE COMPUTER SCREEN - NIGHT 66

Mitch accesses LEXIS/NEXIS -- goes through the modifications -- and punches in Alice Krauss. 'No information available.' Then he punches in Robert Lamm. Still no information.

Then he goes through the modifications and punches in the names Martin Kozinski and Joseph Hodge.

The LEXIS/NEXIS phonenet pulls up the story:

LOCAL ATTORNEYS KILLED IN DIVING ACCIDENT IN GRAND CAYMAN. Details are sketchy but first reports indicate that Martin Kozinski, 39, and Joseph Hodge, 41, were victims of an unexplained explosion, while scuba diving off a boat chartered from the Abanks Diving Lodge, Grand Cayman. The body of the dive captain, Larry Abanks, was not recovered.

CAMERA PUSHES to "Abanks Diving lodge, Boddentown, Grand Cayman." It's where Mitch knows he's going tomorrow.

67 EXT BENDINI BUILDING - PARKING LOT - NIGHT 67

Empty except for the dark blue Mercedes.

68 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - MITCH - NIGHT 68

looking haggard and unshaven, he finishes drafting the last paragraph of the agreement. He gets up, stretches, moves to the window.

69 INT/TO EXT - MITCH'S POV - DAWN 69

The first crack of light visible on the horizon. PULL BACK to include Mitch as he whirls, looks at the time.

MITCH
Shit!...shit!

He grabs his jacket, gathers his things, places his papers on Nina's desk and takes off like a marathon runner.

70 INT MCDEERE HOUSE - DAWN 70

The table still set for dinner. The two unlit candles.

Abby in her robe sits on a chaise idly stroking Hearsay. She does not look up as Mitch comes in, one hand behind his back. He looks down at her a moment. Then:

MITCH
...Car wouldn't start.
(silence)
I got caught in this incredible accident. 12 cars. Maybe 13.
(silence)
There was a pregnant woman in one of them. I had to help deliver the baby.
(silence)
Why do you think I'm working like this?I want you to have--

For the first time Abby turns and looks at him.

ABBY
Wait a minute, wait a minute, I never asked for a thing, Mitch, except for us to be together.

MITCH
--but I want you to have all the stuff you gave up to marry--

ABBY
--Stop it! You don't have to keep winning me Mitch, you won me! Without a dime --
(softening)
It's sweet, I know, it's some kind of courtship, but it's... I don't need all that.
(finally)
Just bring me flowers sometime!

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: 70

Mitch's arm is a blur as he whips a bouquet of wildflowers from behind his back.

MITCH
The market was just opening.

She takes the flowers. Mitch kneels down beside her.

ABBY
What were you working on all night?

MITCH
(conflicted)
Just...It's...this stuff Avery's got me doing for the Cayman trip -- Hey, want to have some eggs?

ABBY
I had some eggs.

MITCH
Want to have some naked?

ABBY
You don't even know what moves me about you, do you? I know what you want. But it's not for me. It's not even for you.

MITCH
...It's easy for somebody rich to talk about being poor as if it's just --

ABBY
This isn't about rich or poor. This is about you trying to fix something that won't get fixed with 10 Mercedes. This is about a mother in a trailer park ... and a brother in jail you pretend you don't have.
(she moves away)
Have a nice trip.

71 EXT CAYMAN ISLANDS - UNDERWATER - DAY 71

Approaching the shipwreck ORO VERDE. A school of Horse-eye Jacks swim curiously past CAMERA. Fingers of beautifully colored coral lie against the ship.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: 71

AVERY'S VOICE
Just follow me and don't overbreathe.

MITCH'S VOICE
What about Sonny Capps? Aren't we were under pressure to get --

AVERY'S VOICE
We're under tremendous pressure -- if we don't get this dive in before the bank, we can't do it. You can't dive and then fly within 24 hours.

The figures of Avery and Mitch drift slowly INTO SHOT. They wear air tanks and Scuba gear.

72 EXT CAYMAN ISLANDS - VERY HIGH ANGLE - DAY 72

A taxi weaves through the crowded streets, past banks from all over the world.

AVERY'S VOICE(CONT'D)
Blackbeard buried treasure in caves just east of here --

73 EXT - BANK BUILDING - DAY 73

Elegant.

AVERY'S VOICE(CONT'D)
--today all the good pirates have caves in town to hide their tax-free loot.

74 INT BANK OFFICE - MITCH & AVERY - DAY 74

Glass partitioned. Out on the floor rows of glowing computer screens. Mitch and Avery going over files.

RANDOLPH OSGOOD, crisp, British, enters hastily. He sits behind his desk, tries to catch his breath.

OSGOOD
Avery, I... I can't allow you to access the Sonny Capps accounts.
(hands back paper)
Your power of attorney has been rescinded, I'm afraid.

(CONTINUED)

74 CONTINUED: 74

AVERY
(incredulous)
By whom?

OSGOOD
Mr. Capps. This morning.

75 EXT SEVEN MILE BEACH - GEORGETOWN - DAY 75

AVERY, some distance away is on a public phone. We don't hear him, but it's obvious that he's angry.

CAMERA SHIFTS to see Mitch seated in the cab, uneasy.

SOUND OF THE TAXI DOOR OPENING. Avery gets in, sweating, distressed. Mitch pulls his door closed. Avery calls to the driver:

AVERY
The Hyatt.
(to Mitch)
Son of a bitch pays less than five percent tax and fires us?!

76 INT/EXT HYATT REGENCY BAR - LATE AFTERNOON 76

An elegant open-air bar. It faces lush green grounds. Young, attractive American and Canadian girls bring drinks across the tiled floor to the low glass tables.

Avery and Mitch sit in their ties, talking to a large muscular man in expensive clothes who stares into a gigantic Mai-Tai. This is SONNY CAPPS.

AVERY
(working hard)
-- this new plan is very aggressive Sonny and it defers all tax liability --

A cellular phone is brought to Sonny at the table.

AVERY (CONT'D)
--for many years. You would start immediately --

Sonny takes the call. Avery waits. Sonny blows a kiss into the phone, puts it down on the table.

SONNY
This tax is only deferred, right?

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

Avery makes an open-handed "what do you want" gesture.

AVERY
The present value of the taxes would be less than half the future value --

CAPPS
...Who says?

AVERY
Well after the election --

CAPPS
--are you telling me who's gonna be in the White House the next four years? That would be valuable information.

Capps waits, puffing on his cigar. Mitch moves in.

MITCH
Mr. Tolar has a tax plan that meets your needs, whoever is in the White House.

CAPPS
Then let him tell me.

MITCH
He's been trying to.

CAPPS
Who the fuck are you, his lawyer or mine?

MITCH
(calmly)
Neither one.

Capps snuggles his chair up to Mitch's, and very quietly:

CAPPS
Then what the fuck are you doing here?

AVERY
Sonny, you're not the firm's sole concern here. We've put you in deals with other clients who may be very sensitive about having their relationships exposed to outside attorneys.

76 CONTINUED: (2) 76

Capps smiles. Nudges Mitch.

CAPPS
Hear that? That's a veiled threat, counselor.
(to Avery)
If we're talking about our Chicago friends, they don't make money when you bill me, you make money when you bill me. And as long as they make money doing business with me, they're not gonna give a flying fuck who does my taxes!
(to Mitch)
You don't know me. I'm a good guy. You cost me over a million bucks, I don't use you for --

AVERY
-Come on, Sonny, let's not get carried away.

SONNY
(rising)
What did I say?

MITCH
(trying to save it)
Maybe it's what you didn't say.

SONNY
What I didn't say? What didn't I say?

MITCH
'Thank you.' Mr. Tolar handed you a schedule that virtually guarantees you zero tax with zero risk.
(picks up proposal)
The basis of your stock would be the face amount of the installment note, but the stock would have no value. Even so, it's deducted and offsets income. You defer your tax in full even though you have a bankable LC.

SONNY
...Deferred till when?

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED: (3) 76

MITCH
What do you care? Whenever it is -- it's still the best interest-free loan you'll ever get.

SONNY
So the worst is I pay my taxes much...much...later.

MITCH
No. The worst is next year they're going to close the loophole, change the regs, and if you haven't grabbed this proposal, you're going to feel like you were fucked with a dick big enough for an elephant to feel it.

SONNY
(beat, not the least offended)
...You know that for a fact?

MITCH
Yeah.

Then Sonny sits back, points to Mitch and turns to Avery.

SONNY
See what you did you miserable son of a bitch! You almost got me in trouble with my lawyer.

77 EXT THE FIRM'S CONDOS - DAY 77

Mitch and Avery approach side by side condos. Their bags are slung over their shoulders.

AVERY
(in good spirits)
You like the word protégé? I never had one. You ever been one?
(re; condos)
I'm A you're B.

Avery opens "A" and fumbles with the key ring.

MITCH
(quietly)
Avery, who's in Chicago?

Avery can't get the "B" key off the key ring.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: 77

AVERY
We'll get to all that.
(hands Mitch the entire key ring)
Hell with it! Clean up and come on over. You earned a good dinner and a night out.

78 INT MITCH'S CONDO - DAY 78

A gorgeous view of sugary beach and blue sea. Mitch comes in, starts toward the couch. But then he stops in the middle of the room, drops his bag... and stands very still.

79 INT AVERY'S CONDO - DAY 79

Twin of the other, but more luxurious. The SOUND of a DOOR OPENING.

AVERY'S VOICE
Mitch?

Mitch comes into SHOT. He's freshly showered, wearing shorts and a simple short sleeved shirt.

MITCH
Yeah.

80 INT UPSTAIRS BATH - AVERY'S CONDO 80

Avery is shaving in a lush bathroom open to a bedroom which commands a view of the beach as well. He has a beer going on the sink edge and is in excellent spirits.

AVERY
Grab yourself a Red Stripe from the fridge, I'm a little slow.

MITCH'S VOICE
...Take your time.

AVERY
Trying to look as pretty as you, which I'm convinced I can! it just takes me a little longer.

MITCH'S VOICE
...Anything to munch on?

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED: 80

AVERY
There's a thing full of stuff by the fridge, use the little key on the chain.

81 INT CONDO KITCHEN - MITCH 81

In front of the open refrigerator. He takes a beer. The open door conceals the PANTRY from Mitch. The only doorway visible to him is on the other side of the refrigerator.

He closes the fridge and moves to it. It doesn't have a knob. Only a lock with the brand name UNIVAC. Mitch checks the key chain, finds the UNIVAC key, inserts it in the lock.

82 INT CONDO BATH - AVERY 82

humming away, patting his face with cologne.

AVERY
See it?

MITCH'S VOICE
Yeah, sure.

83 INT CONDO KITCHEN/PANTRY - MITCH 83

On the CUT, lights come on. A small room, filled with cardboard filing boxes. They are all labeled 'Moroco Ltd. CHICAGO'.

AVERY'S VOICE
Find something?

MITCH
Yeah...

Mitch looks behind him through the open door, then chances it. He goes to the boxes, pulls the lid off one.

MITCH
Listen...Capps said a couple of things--

In the box are Bendini, Lambert & Locke clients' tax files. The client's name is designated MOCO.

AVERY'S VOICE
Capps is a tough guy, but he's also a blowhard. He loves to give the impression he's 'connected', thinks it's glamorous.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: 83

MITCH
That's all...?

The attorney's name who prepared the file is: KRAUSS, ALICE.

84 INT CONDO BEDROOM - AVERY 84

Carefully dressing.

AVERY
Hay, you're about to take the bar exam. Here's a multiple choice: "The difference between tax avoidance and tax evasion is 'a' whatever the IRS says --

85 INT KITCHEN/PANTRY - MITCH 85

He's at the second box. Same client, but the attorney's name is KOZINSKI, MARTIN.

AVERY'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-- 'b' a smart lawyer, 'c' ten years in prison, 'd' all of the above.

86 INT CONDO BEDROOM - AVERY 86

Finishes dressing, amused at his own joke.

AVERY (CONT'D)
Being a tax lawyer's got nothing to do with the law. It's a game.

87 INT CONDO KITCHEN/PANTRY - MITCH 87

He's replaced the boxes and is on the way out when he knocks over his beer bottle. Frozen, he watches the beer spilling.

AVERY'S VOICE (CONT'D)
We teach the rich how to play it so they can stay rich -- and the IRS keeps changing the rules so we can keep getting rich teaching them.

Mitch hears Avery's footsteps. He quickly exits, closing and locking the door. Avery appears around the corner holding his beer. Mitch hands him the keys.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED: 87

AVERY (CONT'D)
-- It's a game. And you just played it very, very well- where's your beer?

CLOSE ON the small rivulet of beer oozing out from under the door along the tiles.

MITCH'S VOICE
I decided to wait for the rum. I hear it's good down here.

FEATURE Avery, smiling, as he puts his arm around Mitch and slips a foil-wrapped condom into Mitch's pocket.

AVERY
Everything's good down here, and you deserve a taste of all of it.

88 EXT - HOLIDAY INN REAR PATIO - NIGHT 88

A BAND fills the open-air bar with its good-natured beat. A party crowd spills everywhere -- tables, bar area, dance floor. The attire is varied, from business suits to bikinis. Lots of exposed flesh and forced gaiety. Loud.

Around the pool, piles of food spread out on folding tables. Grilled Grouper, barbecued shark, pompano, fried shrimp, turtle and oysters, lobster and red snapper.

On the dance floor Avery, arms outspread, dances with abandon. His partner, CARRIE, a buxom blonde, short hair and long tan legs tries good-naturedly to keep up.

Away from the dance floor, at a table close to the beach, an unsmiling Mitch sits drinking rum with Carrie's friend, JULIE, a very pretty brunette in jeans and bathing suit top. She's a little loaded. Her breasts are pressed against his arm as she leans in talking earnestly, incessantly.

MITCH
(quietly)
Look, I don't mean to hurt your feelings but this isn't going to happen... Would you tell my friend that I'm going back to the hotel.

She stares at him a moment. Her eyes grow cold. Mitch reaches across the table and picks up Avery's rum as he stands.

JULIE
You don't know what you're missing.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED: 88

MITCH
...Thanks anyway.

He walks out onto the dark beach, carrying the drink.

89 EXT SEVEN MILE BEACH - MITCH - NIGHT. 89

troubled and thoughtful as he walks the deserted beach. Faint strains of music drift from the beach bars. He passes an occasional beach chair, an abandoned beach towel, as he moves along the light surf.

He slows. Something ahead catches his attention.

90 EXT BEACH - MITCH'S POV - NIGHT 90

In the distance two ghostly figures seem to be struggling at the water's edge. It's almost in slow motion and the wind carries an eerie sound, halfway between a high whistle and a human cry.

Mitch enters SHOT slowly, then picks up his pace.

The struggle seems to continue as he gets closer.

One of the figures, clearly a WOMAN, falls and we hear her cry out, but the cry is muted by the wind and the surf. The MAN picks her up and shakes her like a rag doll.

91 EXT BEACH - ANOTHER ANGLE 91

Suddenly the MAN stops struggling and looks. We cannot make out his face, but he clearly stares at Mitch, who stops, stands still, returning the stare through the darkness.

The Man lets go of the girl and bolts off the beach and up through the grounds of one of the condos.

The Woman tries to move away, but is obviously hurt. She stumbles, then falls to the sand with a sharp intake of breath.

Mitch approaches cautiously.

MITCH
You all right?

No answer. She gets up and tries to take a step, but falls forward onto her knees in the sand. He kneels beside her and tries to ease her over onto her back.

MITCH
-- let me take a look.

(CONTINUED)

91

91 CONTINUED:

YOUNG WOMAN
-- you're not a doctor.

MITCH
No, but I've sprained a lot of ankles. Mostly mine.

She pulls the long dark hair away from her face and looks directly at him. She's in her early 20s, exotic, and so strikingly beautiful it literally sets Mitch back on his heels.

He recovers, sees an abandoned beach towel nearby, retrieves it and tears it into two pieces. Then he kneels and begins to bind her ankle.

MITCH
You should ice this.

She is still, except for the sound of her breathing.

MITCH (CONT'D)
You should also report that guy.

She looks away, shakes her head slightly.

MITCH (CONT'D)
Oh.... that was your boyfriend.

She continues looking away.

YOUNG WOMAN
That was... for money.

Mitch freezes.

MITCH
...Ahhh....

He stops bandaging, sits back onto the sand. The Young Woman looks back directly at him.

YOUNG WOMAN
...Aren't you going to finish?

MITCH
...sorry.

He slowly resumes wrapping her ankle in silence.

YOUNG WOMAN
You think that's --

MITCH
-- got nothing to do with me.

(CONTINUED)

91

91 CONTINUED: (2)

YOUNG WOMAN
(quietly)
I work in a travel agency... I wanted to feel like...all those people with first class tickets ...and pretty clothes...he offered me a lot of money. More than I could ever...I guess I wanted to feel...rich.

MITCH
...How much would it take to feel rich?

YOUNG WOMAN
How much does it take to feel... safe?

He stares at her in the darkness.

YOUNG WOMAN
You did that...You made me feel safe.

His hand rests on her ankle where he's finished wrapping it. She looks up at him...then takes his hand... and brings it up to her mouth where she kisses it.

MITCH
(softly)
...hey...

She places his hand on her breast, running his index finger around her nipple. He starts to pull back. She inhales quickly, pulls his hand up, bites his finger. Then she moves his hand back to her breast.

YOUNG WOMAN
...can you stay with me for awhile?

He starts to speak. Doesn't. She guides his hand to her top button. She feels Mitch's hand flutter, as she guides him through unbuttoning it. She moves his hand down.

Her shoulders and stomach are exposed. The single remaining button at her breast bone holds the blouse tautly over her nipples and lower breast.

He looks out toward the water, eyes closed, then looks back down at her.

His hand is frozen over the last button.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED: (3) 91

She pulls Mitch forward over on top of her. In the distance the SOUND OF A PHONE RINGING.

92 INT AVERY'S CONDO - AVERY - NIGHT 92

The bed's a mess. Avery picks up the phone.

ABBY'S VOICE
Is Mitch McDeere there? This is--

AVERY
--Abby?

93 INT MCDEERE BEDROOM MEMPHIS - ABBY - NIGHT 93

She's on top of the covers, in a nightslip, under a soft light.

AVERY'S VOICE
It's Avery Tolar.

ABBY
Oh, I didn't mean to bother you, I was looking for Mitch, they must've transferred me to you --

INTERCUT AVERY AND ABBY As required.

AVERY
--he's probably walking on the beach, what time is it?

ABBY
(disappointed)
It's late. I'm sorry.

AVERY
No don't be.

An awkward silence. Then:

ABBY
Well, please tell Mitch I called. Goodnight.

AVERY
It's always a pleasure to talk to you Abby, good night.

He hangs up, looks off, where a nude Julie is outlined in the doorway carrying a tray with beer and cold cuts.

94 EXT - SUNRISE OVER THE ISLAND - DAWN 94

Clusters of billowing clouds reflect the splintered rays of the sun's first light.

95 EXT/INT - TAXI - MITCH - EARLY MORNING 95

Driven by a WOMAN with dreadlocks. A disturbed Mitch checks his watch.

96 EXT - LONG LENS - MORNING 96

A sign: ABANKS DIVE LODGE. CAMERA ADJUSTS to see two distant figures at the end of a dock: Mitch, in conversation with BARRY ABANKS, black, late 50's, wiry, in shorts and baseball cap.

It's clear they are talking, but Abanks seems unresponsive, angry, continually turning away, loading air tanks aboard a SEAPLANE at the edge of the dock.

97 EXT - DOCK - CLOSER 97

On the cut: Abanks whirls on Mitch, angry and clearly upset.

ABANKS
I lost my son! Don't you think I would have screamed bloody murder if I thought something was wrong!?

MITCH
(miserable)
-- I'm sorry, you're right I'm sorry, I'm sorry --

Abanks has turned back angrily moving the air tanks.

ABANKS
Nothin' to bury even! Just a stone! They never did find him! Or the other two.

Mitch stands very, very still.

MITCH
...What other two?

ABANKS
(his back to Mitch)
The other two who split the charter. Your friends -- and two other guys.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED: 97

MITCH
(pressing)
...Lawyers...?

ABANKS
They were in swim suits! They paid cash.

MITCH
Were they American?

ABANKS
Coulda' been anything. One was dark, I don't know, squat, heavy, other guy had blonde hair -- almost white --cut straight across like a fuckin helmet.

Hold on Mitch. SOUND of JET ENGINES.

98 INT CAYMAN AIR - MITCH & AVERY - DAY 98

Mitch, confused, guilty, agitated, stares out the window. A hungover Avery watches him a moment.

AVERY
Why don't you take the afternoon off - you deserve it - spend it with that pretty wife of--oh shit, I almost--she phoned last night.

MITCH
... what'd you tell her?

AVERY
That you were probably walking on the beach.

MITCH
I was.

AVERY
(spreads his arms)
...then I guessed right.

99 INT - RENTAL CAR COUNTER - AIRPORT - DAY 99

The uniformed CLERK imprints a credit card. Across from the counter, Mitch waits, glancing quickly around the terminal.

100 EXT - HERNANDO DE SOTO BRIDGE - DAY 100

Mitch's non-descript rental car overtaking the other traffic as he speeds across the Mississippi into Arkansas.

101 INT - ARKANSAS PRISON - DAY 101

ON THE CUT: A mesh door swings open. A slender DARK MAN in his late thirties walks toward us. He stops, stares off:

BEHIND A WIRE visitors screen sits Mitch. He looks at his brother, RAY for a long moment.

RAY
Well, well, the man from Gentleman's Quarterly.

MITCH
...Get outta here.

RAY
Show me how.

MITCH
(smiles guiltily)
How you doin' Ray?

RAY
Pretty fair, how's yourself?

Beat. Then, in the awkwardness:

MITCH
Long time, huh.

RAY
That's OK, I've become a patient man.

He sees Mitch's agony.

RAY
Don't beat yourself up, kid. If I wasn't here, I wouldn't want to be here either.

Mitch is touched by his brother's understanding. A smile between them. Ray moves to the table, sits.

RAY
You talked to Ma?

MITCH
She called a few months ago.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED: 101

RAY
Loaded, right?
(it needs no answer)
Still with the same guy?

MITCH
They're all the same guy.

A silence between them. Then:

RAY
Last time you wrote you were going to take a job -- maybe on Wall Street.

MITCH
I didn't, though, I... didn't.
(quietly)
Hey, Ray...wouldn't it be funny if I went to Harvard and you went to jail, and we both ended up surrounded by crooks?

102 INT OLIVER'S OFFICE - THE FIRM - DAY 102

Oliver and Devasher listen to Avery.

AVERY
-- and McDeere was dazzling. I think we ought to pull Lamar out of the Washington seminar and send Mitch instead.

OLIVER
Let's let him take the Learjet. I knew he'd be sharp.
(to Devasher)
Any problem with that, Bill?

DEVASHER
Not really...So far he's behaved quite predictably.

103 INT ARKANSAS PRISON - MITCH & RAY - DAY 103

MITCH
...so close, like I could have it all... everything, and then....shit!

RAY
What does Abby think?

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED: 103

MITCH
I haven't told her.
(at Ray's look)
...I guess I don't want it to be real, nothing is real until I tell it to Abby.
(then)
She always thought the setup was weird.

RAY
That's my Abby. How is she?

Mitch's expression clouds over.

MITCH
Great...
(suddenly)
I slept with someone else.
(then)
I... Last night. I know it happened...I know how it happened... and I still can't believe I did it...you and Abby. That's my family. I've ignored you and screwed around on her. I gotta tell her.

RAY
Do you? There's a couple of schools of thought on that. For one thing, your guilt's not her problem. Aren't things confused enough?

Mitch looks up at him a beat.

RAY (CONT'D)
How'd you ever land the job with a brother in the joint?

MITCH
(faces it)
I told them we lost touch. Years ago.

RAY
...So we did.

A moment between them. Then:

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED: (2) 103

RAY (CONT'D)
I want you to see a friend. His name is Eddie Lomax. He's a PI in Little Rock, ex-cop.

Mitch nods gratefully.

MITCH
Anything I can do for you?

RAY
Sure. Get me outta here...

MITCH
...Where to?

RAY
Anywhere I can see a lotta sky. I get through the days...I even eat the food. But it's amazing how much you miss the sky.

104 EXT - LITTLE ROCK - BUSINESS DISTRICT - LATE DAY 104

Sunset just beginning to paint itself over rundown three and four story buildings. A few lights coming on.

LETTERED on a 2'd story window: E. LOMAX, PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR. In smaller letters: Divorce, Missing persons. Licensed, bonded, insured.

105 INT - LOMAX OUTER OFC - TAMMY HEMPHILL - LATE DAY 105

Platinum blonde, shapely, constricting leather skirt and matching black boots. She puffs deeply on her 120mm cigarette, marked by pink lipstick. She's preparing to boil water with a submersible heating-coil. An unintelligible VOICE filters out from inside.

TAMMY
Ever plug one of these in only you forgot to put water in...?

A preoccupied Mitch paces through clouds of smoke.

MITCH
What happens?

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED: 105

TAMMY
The lights go out!
(then)
He's been dyin' to see you since you called.

A SHOUT from the other room:

VOICE
Tammy!

TAMMY
(rolls her eyes)
Mr. Lomax will see you now...

106 INT - LOMAX INNER OFFICE - LATE DAY 106

Bare except for a desk and a couple of chairs. No filing cabinets. LOMAX in Levis and lizard skin boots rises and comes toward Mitch with great enthusiasm, hand outstretched.

LOMAX
Mitchell McDeere! Jesus Christ I practically went through law school with you.

He pumps Mitch's hand energetically. Guides him to a chair.

LOMAX(CONT'D)
Ray talked about you every goddam day for three years. I was his cellmate -- he musta told you -- he tell you by the way it was statutory rape? she was 17 looked 25 and I got one to four. Sit, sit, sit.

Tammy enters, bellowing smoke, with two cups of instant coffee.

LOMAX(CONT'D)
Sweet and Low? Equal? Any of this shit? sugar?

MITCH
I...came on business, Eddie.

LOMAX
Good...I owe your brother my life.

TAMMY
I'm leaving.

She shuts the door.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED: 106

LOMAX
Terrific secretary. Got a real character for a husband. Truck driver. Moved here to be close to Graceland because he thinks he's Elvis. Guess what his name is-- Elvis. Elvis Aaron Hemphill. I tell you, the things I run across in this job you wouldn't spray-paint on an overpass -- now what can I do for you?

107 INT THE FIRM - LOBBY - LATE DAY 107

Abby sits in fg, flipping through a magazine at the reception couch. Behind her, Avery appears on the staircase. He hesitates a moment, watching her, then comes forward.

ABBY
Avery - I keep bothering you, you didn't have to come down--

AVERY
Believe me, it's no bother.

ABBY
I was just looking for Mitch. Nina said he hasn't been in all afternoon.

108 INT - LOMAX'S OFC - DUSK 108

The room is in half-shadow now. Lomax shakes his head.

LOMAX
I gotta be honest, this is not my area of expertise.

MITCH
But you think it's possible.

During the following, Lomax pulls a long barreled pistol out from a mount under his desk. He unloads the cylinder, pockets the bullets and remounts the pistol.

LOMAX
I tell you one thing, if the guys in the steak joint <u>were</u> Feds, watch out for 'em, they don't give a fuck about you.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: 108

LOMAX (Cont'd)
(re; the pistol)
I get some very pissed-off husbands in here.
(then)
On the other hand, the lawyers in your firm sure as shit seem accident-prone...OK, let me see what I can find out.

MITCH
You'd better let me call you.

Lomax rises, puts his arm around Mitch, hugs hard.

LOMAX
You look so much like your brother.

Mitch turns to face Lomax.

MITCH
He comes up for parole next year. He says he can last it... What do you think?

LOMAX
There's guys can do all the hard time the State gives 'em. Whatever Ray had, he used up to get this far.

109 EXT MCDEERE HOUSE - NIGHT 109

A few windows lit. Mitch's car pulls into the drive.

110 INT MCDEERE HOUSE - NIGHT 110

Mitch enters, OPERA MUSIC -- The Magic Flute is playing. He moves to the kitchen. Abby mixes some Kibble, sets the bowl down and sits on her heels patting Heresay. Mitch watches her carefully.

MITCH
Hi.

ABBY
...Hi.

MITCH
I didn't think you were home.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED: 110

ABBY
Why not?

MITCH
No car.

ABBY
I took it in for service.
(beat)
Avery brought me home...

Mitch looks at her sharply:

ABBY (CONT'D)
I went to the office looking for you.

MITCH
(feeling his way)
...I wasn't there.

ABBY
Apparently not. I even looked under your desk.

She goes to the sink to rinse off her hands.

MITCH
...I went --

ABBY
-- Avery told me: you were at MSU, at the law library.

MITCH
...Avery did?

ABBY
Avery did.
(then)
but when I happened to spot your car in the lot it made him kind of edgy.

MITCH
...Avery didn't exactly know where I was.

ABBY
(nods)
Ah...probably thought you were out with another woman.

She turns. They hold each other's gaze. Then <u>abruptly:</u>

110 CONTINUED: (2) 110

MITCH
I went to see Ray.

She's totally unprepared for this. She waits.

ABBY
Ray...?

MITCH
Yeah.

ABBY
...Just like that...

MITCH
You were right..I've been stupid. I just got off the plane and knew I had to see Ray.

ABBY
...I would've gone with you on Saturday.

MITCH
I know. I just...I just didn't think.

She knows what it must have cost him to go. And to admit it. she moves to him. Touches him.

ABBY
(then)
...How'd it go?

MITCH
He tried to make it easy for me.

ABBY
Is he OK?

MITCH
Barely. Sends love. He's gotta get that parole.

He shakes his head as if to clear it of the memory of Ray behind the walls.

ABBY(CONT'D)
You want to try something? Let's put the books away, pretend we're back in the old beat-up apartment, broke, and we find money we forgot, in pockets.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED: (3) 110

ABBY (Cont'd)
We'll send out for pizza and drink beer and watch Star Search.
(then softly)
Who knows where it will lead?

MITCH
...Who knows...

He's holding her now. CAMERA ADJUSTS to his face.

111 EXT MSU CAMPUS - DAY 111

WOMAN (V.O.)
Today's questions are all multiple choice. Use the pencil provided only, please.

112 INT STUDENT UNION - DAY 112

Young men and women poised to take the bar exam. Mitch, nervous, eager, among them. PUSH TO him.

WOMAN
No interruptions will be permitted during the test. You may begin.

113 INT LOMAX'S OFFICE - NIGHT 113

The phone is ringing. Eddie and Tammy, fully clothed, are going at each other hot and heavy on his desk chair.

Tammy slides down between Eddie's legs. Her hands go to his fly. The SOUND of the outer door opening.

TAMMY
Your wife--!

EDDIE
She said she was going to Cleveland--

TAMMY
She lies --

She ducks under the desk.

MAN'S VOICE
Don't you answer your phone?

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: 113

Across the desk, a tall, blonde man, hair cut like a helmet: THE NORDIC. With him a short, SQUAT MAN.

LOMAX
Don't you knock?

NORDIC
Where's your secretary?

LOMAX
Out.

NORDIC
She left a cigarette burning.

LOMAX
She does that. Come back in an hour and make an appointment.

NORDIC
Why bother? We're here.

LOMAX
But I'm busy.

NORDIC
Doing what?

LOMAX
Getting my dick sucked, what's it to you.

The Nordic pulls a vicious looking, silenced gun. The bullet tears across Lomax's arm.

NORDIC
Now this is going to turn out badly for you. But we can make it relatively painless. Why are you asking questions about dead lawyers?

LOMAX'S HAND reaches under the desk toward his gun. With his foot, he pushes a horrified Tammy out of the way.

LOMAX
What dead lawyers?

The next shot grazes Lomax's ear.

UNDER THE TABLE, Tammy bites hard on her hand, terrified.

NORDIC
Who hired you to do that?

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (2) 113

The next shot nicks Lomax's collar bone.

LOMAX
(in severe pain)
Okay, okay. Just let me concentrate...his name...was... Julio Iglesias, fuck you, Jack!

An EXPLOSION as Lomax fires. A huge hole is torn in the right side of the desk. The Squat man screams as his leg is hit, and pumps 3 bullets into the body of Lomax. The Nordic tries to stop him but is too late. Lomax is dead.

In the sudden silence, the Nordic turns to the bleeding Squat Man.

NORDIC
Great, just great asshole. You want to ask him a few questions now?

They turn and go quickly. CAMERA PUSHES to the front of the desk. Tammy's face is just visible pressed to the floor.

114 EXT WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT - DC - DAY 114

The monument in bg, as aircraft land and take off. PAN OVER to see a LEARJET come to a stop. Its engines shut down. The door is opened, Mitch de-planes and gets into a waiting town car.

115 EXT CAPITOL HILTON - WASH DC - DAY 115

The car arrives and Mitch gets out.

116 INT LOBBY OF CENTURY ROOM - HILTON - DAY 116

Lawyers pick up their seminar books. Each one has his name as well as the firm he represents printed on the cover. Mitch picks his up. He walks into the Century Room.

117 INT CENTURY ROOM - HILTON - DAY 117

CONGRESSMAN BILLINGS, at a podium, holds up a pamphlet.

BILLINGS
I think this is a carefully balanced proposal. I think it's high-minded but I think it's fair-minded.
(more)

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED: 117

BILLINGS (Cont'd)
In other words it's got something to offend everyone. Now if you want to follow along with me --

During above, CAMERA FINDS Mitch. He opens his seminar book and freezes.

Clipped to the front page is Eddie Lomax's obituary.

A tiny envelope rests in the fold. Mitch opens it. A hand written note reads: "At the lunch break, buy some flowers, take the Vietnam Memorial shuttle out front. It's time to talk." It's signed: W. Tarrance, Special Agent, FBI.

Mitch looks up slowly. Two rows in front of him, and off to his left side a man's head turns toward him. It's Tarrance.

118 EXT VIETNAM MEMORIAL - DAY 118

Gray and chilly. Dead leaves and wilted flowers move in the wind before the granite structure. A SOLITARY PILGRIM in a wheelchair, quilt over his legs, aviator sunglasses shielding his eyes solemnly contemplates the wall.

Mitch moves along the monument, unsure.

PILGRIM
(staring at wall)
Put the flowers down. Go across the grass to the path.

Mitch stares at the Pilgrim a moment, then puts down the flowers and moves on. Tarrance falls in step with him.

MITCH
Who killed Eddie Lomax?

Silence. Ahead, seated on a bench is a Middle-Aged man with a round face in a dark coat.

MAN FROM DOE'S
Sit down.

They both sit on the bench. The MAN in the dark coat moves closer to Mitch, their legs almost touching.

MAN ON BENCH
I appreciate your coming.

No one speaks for a moment. Then The Man From Doe's gets up and moves away.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED: 118

MAN ON BENCH
(quietly, gently)
Mr. McDeere--can I call you Mitch?
(no response)
My name is Voyles, Denton Voyles. I'm with the Department of Justice. We've been--

MITCH
-- What happened to Eddie Lomax?

But Voyles simply holds up his hand -- to silence him.

VOYLES
Mitch, we've been investigating Bendini, Lambert & Locke for four years.
(then)
...no lawyer has ever left your law firm alive.

Mitch is very still.

VOYLES
Two tried to leave -- they were killed. Two were about to try. You know what happened. We have reason to believe your house and your car are bugged, your phones are tapped and your office is wired. They follow you and sometimes your wife. They may be here in Washington as we speak.

MITCH
...Are you saying my life is in danger?

VOYLES
...I'm saying your life, as you know it...is over.

FEATURE Mitch stunned, pale.

VOYLES(CONT'D)
Your law firm is the <u>sole legal representative</u> of the Morolto Crime family in Chicago. Known in the tabloids as The Mafia. The Mob.

MITCH
...I don't believe it.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED: (2) 118

VOYLES
They set up legitimate businesses with dirty money. All cash. All moved offshore...And you do believe it, Mitch, that's why you talked to Thomas Abanks in the Caymans - that's why you got this private investigator asking questions that got him killed.

Mitch sags forward, elbows on his knees.

VOYLES (CONT'D)
They've got a very good front -- Maybe thirty percent of their clients are legitimate. They bring in a new rookie, throw money at him, buy the car, the house. After a couple of years when your kids are in private schools, and you're used to the good life, they tell you the truth.

Mitch begins to shiver.

MITCH
...You mean every partner...?

VOYLES
Every partner knows. We suspect most of the associates. We don't know about the wives.

MITCH
Why don't you get indictments and bust it all up?

VOYLES
They're lawyers. Smart ones and very, very careful. We have to have someone on the inside. We need copies of contracts, client's bank records, articles of incorporation.

MITCH
Wait a minute, you think I'm -

VOYLES
You can say no. But we're going to break this Firm... and when that happens--you'll go to jail along with the rest. It will happen, son, believe me.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED: (3) 118

MITCH
-- why can't I just leave --

VOYLES
--That's what Kozinski and Hodge were trying to do.

MITCH
...What about my wife? can she leave?

VOYLES
I wouldn't advise that. You both have to behave as though everything is normal. Don't talk to anyone-- but make a decision. If you help us, we'll make it worth your while.

MITCH
Worth my while...?

VOYLES
You can still have a pretty good life.

MITCH
You mean in a witness protection program? one day I'm backing out of the driveway and my car explodes!

VOYLES
That's nonsense. You ought to get back or they'll be suspicious. Tarrance will be in touch. He has full authority to negotiate on our behalf.
(he rises)
Why don't you wander back past the memorial.

ANOTHER ANGLE as Mitch walks, grimly. Tarrance moves up alongside. He slips a card into Mitch's pocket.

TARRANCE
You can call anytime day or night. That's a mobile number.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED: (4) 118

MITCH
--Let me get this straight: I steal files from the firm and turn them over to the FBI -- testify against my colleagues and send them to jail.

TARRANCE
--They sucked you into this.

MITCH
Reveal privileged information that'd violate attorney-client confidences--get me disbarred, and then testify in open court against the Mafia.

TARRANCE
--Well, unfortunately--

MITCH
(stops)
Let me ask you something. Are you out of your fucking mind?

He turns away.

TARRANCE
(calling after him)
How long before they find out Lomax was your brother's cellmate?

Mitch turns back sharply -- stares at Tarrance.

TARRANCE (CONT'D)
And what do you think they'll do to him? They can reach anyone inside the wall.

MITCH
(very quiet)
...What can you do?

TARRANCE
Maybe we can get him into protective isolation. And doesn't his parole come up in awhile. You cooperate with us, I'll guarantee the parole board will be grateful. Otherwise... you know what hearings are like... It could go either way.

Mitch stares with rage, then turns away abruptly.

119 EXT WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY 119

The ROAR of the twin jet engines are DEAFENING as the Lear accelerates for takeoff.

120 INT FIRM LEARJET - MITCH - DAY 120

CAMERA MOVES slowly toward Mitch. His fist is pressed into his chin. He's still. Concentrated. His eyes dart to the electrical connections beside the seats.

Then to the light fixtures on the ceiling; Are there microphones anywhere?

He glances forward. His gaze meets that of the PILOT, half-turned back toward him. A beat. The Pilot turns back front.

121 INT - LIMO - MEMPHIS - MATCH CUT - MITCH - DAY 121

He's in the same position, very still.

His eyes move to the rear view mirror.

The DRIVER'S eyes flick up for a moment, meet Mitch's gaze.

MITCH
(abruptly)
Forget about home, driver, take me to the firm.

122 INT AVERY'S OFFICE - DAY 122

Mitch pushes in against the protest of Avery's secretary.

Avery, on the phone, looks up startled. He covers the mouthpiece.

AVERY
Mitch---

MITCH
--I want to see everybody. Right now.

AVERY
Get real. I'm on overseas, I got two guys on hold, and I--

Mitch leans across the desk, disconnects the call.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED: 122

MITCH
Right now.
(then)
...I just had a little chat with the FBI.

Off Avery's look:

123 INT OLIVER'S OFFICE - GROUP SHOT - DAY 123

Oliver, McKnight, Locke, Avery, all face Mitch in silence. After a beat;

OLIVER
They didn't try to coerce you?

MITCH
Nope.

MCKNIGHT
They didn't offer you money?

MITCH
Nope.

MCKNIGHT
Did they ask you to contact them again?

MITCH
...What for?

OLIVER
Then exactly what did they want?

Mitch spreads his hands, like; "it's obvious."

MITCH
(quick smile)
The secret files.

A beat. Some smiles, laughter -- except from Locke.

AVERY
Who had those secret files last?
You, Royce?

MCKNIGHT
I gave them to you.

More smiles.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: 123

MITCH
...they also suggested that Hodge and Kozinski were murdered.

Silence. Mcknight jumps up, SLAMS the table.

MCKNIGHT
That's it! Sonsofbitches! Now we ought to build a case and sue. This is pure harassment.

LOCKE
That was it? That's everything that was said?

MITCH
Well, as far as I can remember. It wasn't exactly a sequential conversation. There was a lot of yelling -- mostly by me.

OLIVER
Mitch, we're always doing battle with the Government. If it isn't the Justice Dept, it's the IRS. And you know what? We beat them every time and they hate us for it. They can't get to us so they pick on somebody new. They invite you to break the law, it doesn't cost them anything! But it costs you everything. Now I don't want you to worry about this.
(rises)
It's gotten serious enough we'll have to get into it legally.

AVERY
Who do we bill this hour to?

MITCH
How about the FBI?

Again some laughter - as it breaks up. Avery holds the door for Mitch, but as he starts toward it;

LOCKE
What was his name? the Special Agent?

MITCH
...I think...Tarrance.

124 EXT MCDEERE HOUSE - DUSK 124

The Limo drops Mitch off in front. the sprinklers are on. The SOUND of music from within: TOSCA. SMOKE from burning leaves softens the light.

Mitch approaches his doorway, but stops. He watches Abby through the glass, stricken.

She moves from the stove to the refrigerator preparing dinner -- a graceful ritual that, given the music, seems almost a dance.

She looks up, spots Mitch. For a moment she's startled. As though he's a mirage. Then a radiant smile.

125 INT MCDEERE HOUSE - DUSK 125

Mitch enters, tries to smile.

ABBY
I can't believe that-- it's so weird - I was just thinking about you. Somebody's burning leaves down the street, did you smell it? and it reminded me of the time we --

Mitch has put his finger to his mouth signaling her to be quiet as he moves to the CD player.

ABBY (CONT'D)
If you're afraid you'll wake the kids, we don't have any.

She watches puzzled as he turns TOSCA up loud. Then he moves to her, takes her in his arms. His mouth is at her ear. He begins to whisper. CAMERA TIGHTENS on her face as we watch her eyes go from bewilderment, to fear, to terror as the Opera soars. HOLD FOR A BEAT.

126 EXT MCDEERE HOUSE - NIGHT 126

Her figure is a blur as she tears out of the house and runs with all the desperation in the world.

Mitch tears out after her.

MITCH
Abby! -- Abby!

She runs, and runs, and runs, until her lungs are on fire.

She slows.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED: 126

Mitch finally overtakes her.

As he does she covers her ears with her hands. Her breath comes in huge gasps. He starts to say something--

ABBY
Shhh! -- Don't say anything!
Don't tell me anymore.

They walk. The only SOUND is her ragged breath.

127 EXT A PARK - NIGHT 127

Mitch and Abby cross the grass. She drops to her knees, then sits in the grass, weak, shaking. Mitch sits beside her.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(spent, low)
...everything. Every single thing we've said or done since we moved into that house-- nothing was between us!
(shakes her head)
I won't go back there! Can't we get in our own car and drive back to Boston? Tonight! with nothing.

MITCH
(in agony)
They'd find us.

ABBY
How do you go to work tomorrow? How do you look at Avery? What do you say??

MITCH
I don't know...I talk about work.

ABBY
That's insane!

MITCH
I've thought of everything. Here, in The Caymans, in Washington, that's all I've done - try to think of a way out. If we run, they'll find us, and it gets Ray killed--

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED: 127

ABBY
--but if you testify --

MITCH
--They say they'll protect us, they say we'll be safe.

ABBY
'Safe??' How is that possible? What are you going to do?

MITCH
Go in tomorrow and start to steal files - I don't have a choice.

ABBY
Mitch, what are you saying? you'll be revealing clients' secrets - you'll never be able to practice law again for the rest of your life - everything you worked for!- they can't ask you to do that.

MITCH
Abby, don't -- We have to behave exactly as we have been. Go to work--and come home--every day.

The impossibility of it washes over her and she has to lie back on the grass. She stares up at the stars.

ABBY
Szechwan Beef from Wong Boys... That was the last time I remember laughing.

MITCH
(gently)
Can you handle it? going back to the house? with microphones?

ABBY
...I don't know.

MITCH
...Neither do I.

ABBY
...I can't see your eyes in the dark.

He leans closer. She reaches out, puts her arms around him. They lie silently on the grass holding each other.

128 EXT THE FIRM - EARLY MORNING 128

Streets deserted, except for a Cotton Truck parked in the alley. Dutch argues with the driver, trying to get him to move it. Mitch's car pulls into the parking structure.

129 INT FIRM - HALLWAY - MITCH - EARLY MORNING 129

He comes rapidly down the hall, checking to make sure he's alone.

MITCH'S OFFICE: Mitch enters and turns on the lights. He goes to his desk. He sorts through a stack of folders -- picks up one labled: CAPPS/ITAMI; articles of INC.

IN THE HALLWAY: He moves with purpose toward the Xerox machine. He checks his watch, checks to see that he's alone.

XEROX AREA: He pushes the start button on a large machine. It comes to life and an ALARM GOES OFF. Mitch almost panics. He begins to push at buttons. He can't stop the SOUND.

SUDDENLY Lamar appears, coat on, umbrella in hand, laughing.

LAMAR
What the hell are you doing?

Lamar punches a code and the alarm stops. Mitch is flustered, tries to make the files as inconspicuous as possible.

MITCH
Jesus...I was just trying to make a copy of a --

LAMAR
They just started this. You have to have the billing code for each client.

MITCH
You mean every time I copy a piece of paper it's recorded?

130 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - MORNING 130

He's pacing. Worried. He buzzes Nina, speaks into phone:

MITCH
Is Avery in yet Nina?

131 INT AVERY'S OFFICE - THE FIRM - DAY 131

Avery's at his desk, on the phone. There are a couple of diving books visible.

AVERY
Come for one night then, can't you?...It used to be worth it...

He sees Mitch, waves him in.

AVERY(CONT'D)
Ok...sure, maybe next time. Bye, Cordelia.

He hangs up, the smile beginning to fade.

AVERY(CONT'D)
That was Cordelia.

MITCH
Your wife.

AVERY
From the song of the same name.

MITCH
Avery, I had a couple thoughts about those Capps LC's. When's the next trip?

AVERY
(big smile)
For me?--next week. If you think I'm going to let Capps get another look at you, you're crazy. But write down every single thought you have and I'll be happy to take credit.

132 INT CORRIDOR - THE FIRM - DAY 132

Mitch, sweating, grim, moves toward his office. A WOMAN with a brown bag stands near Nina's desk, her back to him. As Mitch approaches:

NINA
Mr. Mulholland's called twice about his bills again.

MITCH
Tell Mr. Mulholland to take his bills and -- isn't he down the street?

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED: 132

NINA
Yes. In the Cotton Exchange.

MITCH
Tell him I'll see him later.

The Woman turns around. It's Tammy.

NINA
Oh, did you order coffee and donuts from the Deli?

Mitch is about to say no -- but he recognizes Tammy. He's thrown for a moment. Then:

MITCH
Yeah...I sure did.

He nods to Tammy, who follows him into the office. She puts her bag on his desk. He digs into his pocket, eyes on her.

TAMMY
$4.25--the receipt's in there.

He hands her a Ten -- she puts it in her pocket. No change.

TAMMY (CONT'D)
The receipt's in there.

She goes. Mitch glances toward Nina, opens the bag, finds the receipt. He turns it over, reads the handwriting.

133 EXT BEALE STREET PARK - DAY 133

HOMELESS on benches. SOUND of night-time Blues, incongruous in the daylight. A PANHANDLER moves across.

MITCH'S VOICE
...how did you see them and they didn't see you?

During the above, CAMERA SLIDES to reveal Tammy and Mitch on a bench. She hides behind a paper not looking at him. He's eating a sandwich and holding a law magazine.

TAMMY
--I was under the desk.
(beat)
I was vacuuming the rug. You want me to draw you a diagram!?
(her eyes well)
I loved him.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED: 133

She shakes away the tears.

MITCH
I'm sorry, Tammy.

TAMMY
They wanted to know who hired him and why he was asking questions about dead lawyers.

MITCH
...You actually saw them?

TAMMY
One guy was short, looked like a wrestler. Other guy was blonder than I am, hair almost white -- bangs.

CAMERA has circled to end CLOSE ON MITCH as he hears this.

TAMMY'S VOICE
My landlady said they came looking for me yesterday. I can't go back to Little Rock, I checked into a Motel '6' here on River Street, I didn't know where else to go.
(beat)
Listen, they're gonna put Eddie together with Ray - and when they do, it'll lead to you...You're in as much trouble as I am.

MITCH
...I know...I know...and I can't even Xerox a file.

134 EXT THE FIRM - MITCH - DAY 134

returning from the park. As he crosses to enter, a Limo pulls up, blocking him. Devasher leans out.

DEVASHER
Hi there. Bill Devasher, Mitch. Firm security.

Mitch nods. Devasher remains leaning out of the Limo.

DEVASHER(CONT'D)
Mr. Locke and Mr. Lambert were telling me about your run-in with the FBI. I wonder if we could have a little talk.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED: 134

MITCH
Actually I told them everything-

DEVASHER
Hop on in. This won't take long.

Mitch reluctantly gets into the back seat. There is another passenger in the front seat who glances back. Mitch looks up -- into the eyes of -- The Nordic. The Limo speeds off.

135 EXT MUD ISLAND - DESERTED AREA - DAY 135

The car comes to a halt. In the silence Devasher gets out. Mitch follows. The Nordic remains inside. Devasher goes to the trunk of the Limo, opens it, takes a briefcase.

DEVASHER(CONT'D)
So Mitch, this is a debriefing. I know what you've told the fellas, so I pretty much get the picture. Now it's my job to give you the picture. What I'm concerned about, son, is this - the FBI wouldn't have come after you if they didn't think they could get to you. What do you think made them think that?

MITCH
I have no idea.

DEVASHER
It's my job to have an idea about that. For example, they might know how much your wife means to you. They might use that.

MITCH
How?

DEVASHER
Avery said that last Friday you had the afternoon off and ..well, he figured you might be with another woman.

MITCH
Why would Avery think--

DEVASHER
--How do you know you weren't followed?

(CONTINUED)

135 CONTINUED: 135

Devasher sees a look of panic in Mitch's face.

DEVASHER (CONT'D)
Imagine your pretty, proper little wife going to the mailbox to get her Redbook and her Sharper Image catalogue and finding this strange envelope, addressed to her, marked PHOTOS DO NOT BEND.

From the briefcase, Devasher produces just such an envelope. Stamps, PHOTOS DO NOT BEND, and all. It's sealed.

DEVASHER (CONT'D)
Imagine her opening that. Go ahead.

Mitch opens it. There are four pictures. They are of Mitch and the Girl on the beach -- making love.

DEVASHER (CONT'D)
Devastating. Not just screwing Mitch, but the kind of intimate acts, oral and whatnot, that could be particularly hard for a trusting young wife to forgive, and impossible to forget. The FBI is capable of just this sort of coercion. So watch yourself, Mitch. I'll do my best to protect you - and I know you'll do your best to protect the firm. If the FBI so much as smiles in your direction again you'll let me know, won't you? Won't you Mitch?

Mitch walks a few steps, clutching the photos, then drops to his knees and vomits.

136 INT THE FIRM - ELEVATORS - DAY 136

They open. A pale Mitch emerges, the envelope under his arm.

At his outer office, Lamar intercepts him urgently.

LAMAR
Where you been? Oliver wants to see you in the library.

Mitch wants to get rid of the envelope.

MITCH
Let me just put this stuff away.

(CONTINUED)

136 CONTINUED: 136

LAMAR
Now. He's been waiting.

Lamar grabs him and leads him to the library doors.

137 INT LIBRARY - DAY 137

Mitch enters. Freezes. Oliver and all 31 MEMBERS of the firm, stare at him. He stares back, uncomprehendingly.

OLIVER
You think you're pretty smart, don't you?
(silence)
Well, we've been informed there's somebody smarter.
(then)
You didn't get the highest score on the bar exam, you got the second highest score.

They all raise champagne glasses, concealed until now at their sides.

GROUP
Hear! Hear!!

Avery pours a glass for a stunned Mitch. Then Abby steps forward from where she'd been hidden. There is a tense instant between them. Then she kisses him lightly on the cheek. He's acutely aware of the envelope.

ABBY
Congratulations.

MITCH
They called you, uh?

AVERY
I did.

Oliver moves up, puts his arm around a tense Mitch.

OLIVER
Well done.

MITCH
...Who was the guy who scored highest?

OLIVER
It was a young woman, I believe, from Fayette County.

(CONTINUED)

137 CONTINUED: 137

MITCH
Sure, I remember her, she had the answers written on her hand.

General merriment. Abby is forced to smile, but we see the tension.

138 EXT COTTON EXCHANGE - DAY 138

Distinguished. PUSH IN TO the brass plate: COTTON EXCHANGE.

139 INT COTTON EXCHANGE - EMPTY ROOMS - DAY 139

A view of the river. The RENTAL AGENT finishes giving Tammy a tour. She's dressed upscale, wears sunglasses.

AGENT
The lease would be under..?

TAMMY
Greenwood Secretarial Services.

AGENT
And you are...?

TAMMY
Doris Greenwood. They'll be delivering the Xerox machine tomorrow.

140 INT COURTROOM - CLOSE ABBY - DAY 140

On her face as we hear:

GROUP (UNISON)
'I will employ such means only as are consistent with truth and honor.'

CAMERA PANS to reveal 45 young MEN AND WOMEN , right hands raised, before a Supreme Court JUDGE, taking the oath for the Tennessee bar.

JUDGE
...I will maintain the confidence and preserve inviolate the secrets of my client. --

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED: 140

GROUP
'I will maintain the confidence and preserve inviolate the secrets of my client.--'

CAMERA has TIGHTENED to Mitch.

JUDGE
I will truly and honestly conduct myself in the practice of my profession to the best of my skill and ability, so help me God.

141 INT NIGHT CLUB - MITCH AND ABBY - NIGHT 141

Loud BLUES. What should be a celebration. Plates of food, but Mitch isn't eating. He holds a scrolled certificate commemorating his passing the bar.

MITCH
Great...

She watches him.

MITCH(CONT'D)
"I will maintain the confidence and preserve inviolate the secrets of my client"??

He laughs without humor, SLAPS the scroll on the table.

ABBY
...There's absolutely no way to do what they want you to do without betraying clients?

MITCH
(miserable)
No...

She takes his hand.

ABBY
OK...then...I guess we're doing the best we can.

MITCH
...No we're not.

ABBY
...What do you mean?

He stares at her a moment, agonized. Then looks away.

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED: 141

MITCH
I can't...I can't believe I did what I did...

Her stomach goes cold.

ABBY
...What?
(a breath)
What did you do?

MITCH
That night in the Caymans, when you telephoned...

ABBY
You were on the beach...

MITCH
Yeah...

And in that moment, his eyes, his pain -- she knows.

ABBY
...And you.....?

MITCH
...Yeah...I did.

Abby puts her fork down slowly, carefully. She waits.

ABBY
Who?

MITCH
Nobody...I don't even know.

ABBY
You don't know...

MITCH
Abby, it doesn't mean anything, I promise-

ABBY
-It means everything. Why would you fuck some stranger on a beach one night away from me? Who does that??

MITCH
I promise you this isn't --

(CONTINUED)

141 CONTINUED: (2) 141

ABBY
-- You can't promise anything!
Not ever. Not anymore.

There is no answer possible. He closes his eyes.

ABBY
(quietly)
Give me the keys!

He signals for the waitress, but Abby can't wait. She grabs the keys, leaves Mitch at the table, washed over by the MUSIC.

142 INT THE FIRM - LIBRARY - NIGHT 142

Oliver, Locke, McKnight and Devasher seated, as Avery walks in. He looks at their grave expressions.

AVERY
I thought there were only two brothers Grimm...

OLIVER
Sit down, Avery. Anthony and Joey are coming down next week.

AVERY
What, because of McDeere?

MCKNIGHT
We've told them we think he's telling the truth, but they're concerned.

LOCKE
They've been edgy since the Kozinski and Hodge mess, they're concerned about the FBI's new aggressiveness, and they're concerned we might be misreading this boy.

AVERY
--and the Morolto's are going to what? take over things personally?

OLIVER
(to Avery)
Are we misreading him?

Before Avery can answer:

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED: 142

MCKNIGHT
He lied about his brother.

AVERY
Wouldn't you lie about having a felon in the family to get this job?

DEVASHER
He ought to be kept on a short leash.

AVERY
Why? You've got nothing to be suspicious about.

DEVASHER
I get paid to be suspicious when I've got nothing to be suspicious about.

143 EXT STREETS - MITCH - NIGHT 143

He walks aimlessly.

He wanders past coldly lit windows.

Past a RAP-SPOUTING BEGGAR, a MAN PLAYING SAXOPHONE for pennies.

Past a young BLACK KID doing backward flips on the pavement near a top-hat with change in it.

Past the COURTHOUSE. He glances up for a moment.

He walks into:

144 INT MCDEERE HOUSE - NIGHT 144

Through the kitchen window, Abby is visible, sitting alone on a lawnchair, outside in the dark. Mitch moves to the window and stares out at her.

145 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - MITCH WITH FILES - DAY 145

Among the files, one marked MULHOLLAND, one marked CAPPS. Mitch puts the Capps file into his briefcase, moves through the outer office, calling to Nina:

MITCH
I'm going over to see Mulholland for a half hour or so.

146 EXT FRONT STREET - HIGH ANGLE THRU WINDOW - MITCH - DAY 146

He walks rapidly, briefcase in his hand. We are looking down from a window three or four stories up.

147 INT COTTON EXCHANGE LOBBY - MITCH - DAY 147

Mitch gets into the elevator. Just as the doors close, a MAN gets in. Mitch has punched #7, the man punches #8.

The elevator stops on #3. Tammy gets in, reaches for #8, sees that it is already pressed. She places an identical briefcase down next to Mitch's.

The elevator ascends. Stops at #7. Mitch picks up other brief case, exits.

148 INT 7TH FLOOR HALLWAY - MITCH - DAY 148

Walks down the hall toward a doorway marked MULHOLLAND ASSOC. He enters.

149 INT MULHOLLAND ASSOC - MITCH AND MULHOLLAND - DAY 149

Frank Mulholland is a well-dressed, obviously prosperous, Black businessman in his 50s.

MULHOLLAND
I do think you'll find the thirty three hours billed for last month excessive. Check your time sheets.

MITCH
(preoccupied)
Yes sir, I will.

MULHOLLAND
...You know this over-billing thing has become so common that we've come to expect it from law firms - but that doesn't make it right. What everyone forgets is that it's a felony.

He picks up the envelope with the bill in it.

MULHOLLAND (CONT'D)
When they put a stamp on this envelope and sent it through the mail... they comitted a Federal offense--

(CONTINUED)

149 CONTINUED: 149

CAMERA HAS MOVED to Mitch, as an idea begins to take shape.

MULHOLLAND'S VOICE
--and I'll tell you something else - each time they do it--

MITCH
(slowly)
--it's a 10,000 dollar fine... and three to five years...it was on the bar exam.

150 INT ELEVATOR - MITCH - DAY 150

He's pressed #3. He's agitated.

151 INT 3D FLOOR HALLWAY - MITCH - DAY 151

He comes hurriedly out of the elevator, down the hall, enters a door marked GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL SERVICES.

152 INT GREENWOOD SERVICES - MITCH AND TAMMY - DAY 152

There is now a phone, Xerox, and a fax machine. A BEEPER sits on the desk. Tammy holds two copied files. He begins to pace.

MITCH
--Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute...I think...there might...be a way to do this without...breaking the law.

TAMMY
Is that our chief concern here?

MITCH
(points to copies)
..tear those up - I might not have to use them.

TAMMY
How you going to get the FBI off your back?

MITCH
By giving them the Firm...I think -- I've got to get to that stuff in the Caymans.

TAMMY
For the FBI?

(CONTINUED)

152 CONTINUED: 152

MITCH
No. For me.

TAMMY
They won't let you go you said.

MITCH
We'll have to get to it another way.

TAMMY
What are you talking about??

MITCH
I'm not sure...yet. In that stuff of Eddie's, is there a camera?

TAMMY
...Yes.

MITCH
And some kind of recording device that's wireless?

TAMMY
Yeah...?

MITCH
Can you use them?

TAMMY
Whenever Eddie said, 'My Associate'?
(points to herself)
Yours truly.

153 INT THE FIRM - LIBRARY - MITCH - DAY 153

He's pulled volumes on postal regulations.

He stares at one section for a long moment.

154 EXT QUINN HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY 154

A table by the pool set for brunch. Lamar, Kay, Mitch and Abby eat eggs benedict. The Quinns' TWO CHILDREN play croquet loudly in the background.

(CONTINUED)

154 CONTINUED: 154

LAMAR
Godamn Avery --we're sweating this real estate thing for Dunbar he'll be down in that blue-green water off Parrot's landing picking up Spiny Lobsters.

KAY
--and anything else he can find.

Talk of The Caymans and Avery's extra-curricular activity strain Mitch and Abby's already strained behavior. During the above dialogue, they have both reached for the pepper-mill at the same time. As their hands touch, they pull away as though from an electric shock. Then each defers -- in an overly polite manner -- to the other.

KAY(CONT'D)
(to Lamar)
Besides -- you couldn't go anyway. You wouldn't want to miss the 'train wreck.'
(to Mitch & Abby)
His sister and her five children are coming this week.

155 EXT/INT - PARKING STRUCTURE - MALL - DAY 155

Mitch, in the Mercedes winds upward looking for a parking space. He's in the same clothes as the preceding scene.

BEHIND HIM, in an ND CAR, the Nordic and the Squat Man follow. They drive past him as he parks.

ON ANOTHER LEVEL as the ND car passes the back of a parked Mini-Van. It's loaded with groceries. Tammy is behind the wheel with a camera at the van's window.

PARKING STRUCTURE EXIT - DAY

The Mini-van, full of groceries, drives out and past the ND CAR.

156 EXT/INT - THE MINI-VAN - STREETS - DAY 156

Tammy, driving, lights up a Sherman with a column of flame. She checks the rear view mirror, as Mitch sits up alongside.

TAMMY
Malls are a bitch, face it. Forget following anyone - you're lucky to find a place to park.

(CONTINUED)

156 CONTINUED: 156

Mitch is subdued.

MITCH
...Did Elvis ever find out about Eddie?

TAMMY
You kidding? he loved Eddie! Hell that stuff was over between me and Elvis when I was 18. We'd been married 2 years and one morning at breakfast I just turned too old for him.
(then)
But I tell ya, everybody loves Elvis. The man's a panda. And he'd do anything for me.

They turn into the crowded parking lot of a Dog Track.

157 INT/EXT DOG TRACK - LATE AFTERNOON 157

The HOUNDS are running full tilt, chasing a large bone around a moving oval.

MITCH'S VOICE
Doesn't a dog ever get the bone?

TARRANCE'S VOICE
I heard it happens once in a while. It's a disaster. They can't ever get that dog to run again.

Mitch and Tarrance are in the plush, first class area. Visible through the glass walls, are the 'peasant class' bleachers. The place is crowded and provides good cover.

TARRANCE (CONT'D)
Now Mitch, Mr. Voyles wants me to assure you how much the Bureau appreciates your decision to co-operate--

MITCH
(flat)
-A million dollars in a numbered account in Switzerland.

TARRANCE
...I think that's -

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED: 157

MITCH
--and I want my brother out. Now.

TARRANCE
...Your brother's a convicted felon.

MITCH
Then get yourself another snitch.

TARRANCE
(tries for calm)
He's in for manslaughter.

MITCH
-It was a brawl. In a bar. If he hadn't done some boxing it would've been self-defense--

TARRANCE
(still trying)
-It's still a felony, Mitch.

MITCH
You heard me, Tarrance, my brother out now...and make it a million and a half in a --

TARRANCE
--How about getting down on your knees and kissing my ass for not indicting you as a co-conspirator right now, you chickenshit little Harvard cocksucker!

MITCH
I haven't done anything and you know it--

TARRANCE
--Who gives a fuck? I'm a federal agent! You know what that means, you lowlife motherfucker? You got no rights, your life is mine. I can kick your teeth down your throat and yank 'em out your asshole and I'm not even violating your civil rights!

MITCH
(oddly formal)
You are Agent Wayne Tarrance--

(CONTINUED)

157 CONTINUED: (2) 157

TARRANCE
--God damn right I am! and maybe
local cops can't beat up....

But he trails off, bothered -- perhaps it's intuition. There's suddenly a ring. Tarrance answers his cellular phone.

TARRANCE (CONT'D)
Who is it?

FEMALE VOICE
Wayne Tarrance, Federal Agent.

TARRANCE
This is Wayne Tarrance --

FEMALE VOICE
--And so is this:
(Tarrance's Voice)
'I'm a federal agent, God damn it,
do you know what that means, you
lowlife motherfucker?'

158 EXT THE MINI VAN IN THE PARKING LOT 158

Tammy, snuggled among grocery bags, expertly operating her Fargo unit, playing back the tape.

BACK TO SCENE

Tarrance still has the phone to his ear, and looks at the clean-cut Mitch. He's been double-fucked and he knows it.

MITCH
Now...I think you ought to
reconsider.

159 INT VOYLES OFFICE - WASHINGTON - LATE AFTERNOON 159

He's on the phone, pacing, angry.

VOYLES
You think I'm going to let this
kid tell us how to run the penal
system in this country??

160 INT FBI OFFICE - MEMPHIS - TARRANCE - LATE AFTERNOON 160

Tarrance, head in his hands, holds the phone.

(CONTINUED)

160 CONTINUED: 160

TARRANCE
Sir, it's the only way he'll give us the files.

VOYLES
...Then get a subpoena, let the brother out, follow him, and the minute we get the files yank him back!

161 EXT MCDEERE HOUSE - EARLY EVENING 161

Mitch, in same clothes, finds Abby sitting near the pool, a glass of wine in hand, a half-drunk bottle beside her. He glances toward the house. The following is played ALMOST WHISPERING.

MITCH
...I think I might've found a way out. It's a long shot, but..

He watches her drink.

MITCH
...I drive you to drink?
(silence)
You don't want to hear the plan.

ABBY
Sure ...Would it change anything between us?

MITCH
...No. It's just a plan.

ABBY
I can't do this anymore. I can't help you here, I can't help myself...I've given notice at school. I'll stay until the break Wednesday.

MITCH
...You're right...it's better if you go. Safer.

She smiles to herself, shakes her head, drinks.

MITCH(CONT'D)
...I love you. Very--

She hurls the bottle. It smashes against the house.

(CONTINUED)

161 CONTINUED: 161

ABBY
Don't you dare, you sonofabitch.

A long moment. They both watch the house expectantly. Then:

ABBY(CONT'D)
You want to tell me the plan?

MITCH
Tomorrow... but it's just a plan... Where are you going?

ABBY
My folks first, then I don't know.

He looks back toward the house, then to Abby.

MITCH
...It might not be safe for you to leave unless--

ABBY
--Oh, I know...

She breathes, then looks up oddly.

ABBY
Somewhere...inside...in the dark...the firm is listening. Shall we go in and do this now for the record?

She walks forward, past Camera. HOLD on the empty backyard, the dying light. Then Abby's FILTERED VOICE fades up:

ABBY'S VOICE
I've made a decision. My mother hasn't been well, she's having some tests...I want to be there. We never see each other anyway-

162 INT SOMEWHERE IN THE FIRM - NIGHT 162

Close on spinning tape reels.

ABBY'S VOICE (CONT'D)
-and I need some time to think.

A man's hand enters SHOT, punches rewind.

MAN'S VOICE
Call Devasher. She's leaving him.

162A INT MITCH'S OFFICE - MITCH - MORNING 162A

standing at the window, staring out, his back to the door.

LAMAR'S VOICE
Knock, knock.

Mitch turns. Lamar is in the doorway.

LAMAR(CONT'D)
Bad times?
(then)
Abby called Kay...Listen, all the wives go a little nuts the first year. She'll come back... probably want to get pregnant.

Mitch's face:

163 INT GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL SERVICES - NIGHT 163

Tammy smoking intensely, Mitch on the phone, near the fax machine, holding an 8 x 10 grainy photo.

MITCH
Mr. Thomas Abanks, please.

164 INT ABANKS DIVING LODGE - ABANKS - NIGHT 164

The SOUND of compressors filling tanks. In the dim light, we see a fax emerge. It is picked up by the hands of Barry Abanks.

It's a photo of the Nordic. Handwritten across the bottom is: 'If this is the man, I know where he is.'

165 EXT THE FIRM - DAWN 165

In the half-light, Mitch pulls into the parking structure.

DUTCH
6AM?? Don't you ever take it easy?

166 INT THE FIRM - EARLY MORNING 166

Mitch and Dutch come toward us down the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

166 CONTINUED: 166

MITCH
Sorry, Dutch, but I've got to justify a client's bill before a breakfast meeting and my time sheets are locked up in the office manager's.

They stop before a door.

DUTCH
Well I don't know --

MITCH
Call Avery if you'd like. I'm just trying to head off a legal action...

167 INT PRISON - RAY MCDEERE - DAY 167

Led to the visitors screen by a GUARD with three hash marks. On the other side of the screen sits Tammy. When she sees Ray, her eyes fill - but she manages a smile.

TAMMY
You're taller than I thought.

RAY
...that's nice to hear.

TAMMY
There's been a change of plans.

RAY
...I didn't know there was a plan.

TAMMY
Good, because it's been changed.

RAY
...Who are you sweetheart?

168 INT GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL - MITCH - NIGHT 168

OPEN CLOSE on a NorthWest Airlines ticket. A note pinned to it reads; Here's ticket to Chicago - open return. Signed 'T'.

MITCH
...what time has Avery chartered the boat for?...Are you sure they'll be able to keep him out long enough?

169 EXT/INT ABANKS DIVE LODGE - CAYMANS - NIGHT 169

ABANKS
(on phone)
They're taking him to Lemon Drop Off - it'll be a good 6 hours.

MITCH'S VOICE
Tammy will be down tomorrow to set things up.

170 INT MCDEERE KITCHEN - MORNING 170

Mitch has made coffee. He pours one for Abby as she comes in carrying a suitcase. She looks at him. He hands her the coffee. He's very careful with her.

MITCH
I can whip us up some eggs.

ABBY
Last day. I don't want to be late.

He looks at her, wants very much to be fair. So he moves to her suitcase.

MITCH
(quietly)
You're right. Time to go.

171 EXT MCDEERE HOUSE - MORNING 171

The doors and trunk of her car open as Mitch stows the last of her things. Hearsay stands by.

ABBY
You're running a 3-ring circus, aren't you?
(silence)
Tammy's left to meet Abanks?

MITCH
Not until late tonight.

She's ready to get in the car...

ABBY
Well. I hope it...goes--

MITCH
--It has to.

(CONTINUED)

171 CONTINUED: 171

ABBY
God damn you - I'm the one who feels guilty!

He has no words. She gets behind the wheel. Hearsay gets in beside her, his head sticking out of the window.

MITCH
Take care of yourself.

172 INT MITCH'S OFFICE - DAY 172

Mitch sits at his desk, staring at nothing. Nina comes in.

NINA
Mr. Lambert would like to see you.

172A INT OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY 172A

Mitch enters tentatively.

OLIVER
Mitch, I don't want to seem intrusive, but, you know people talk and word's gotton around that there are some problems between you and Abby. I want to tell you how sorry I am, but knowing both of you, I'm confident this will all work out...I'm sorry you're going through this. Can I do anything at all?

173 EXT SCHOOLYARD - DAY 173

A BOY and GIRL hurling lunch at each other. Abby patching it up. Hearsay standing by. One of the kids tugs on Abby's sleeve and points. She looks up, freezes when she sees:

AVERY on the other side of the fence. She moves carefully to him.

AVERY
Ah, boys and girls together.

She observes his bitterness with barely concealed hostility.

ABBY
What are you doing here?

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED: 17

AVERY
Would you believe I happened to be in the neighborhood?

ABBY
...No.

AVERY
I heard this is your last day.

ABBY
...My mother isn't well.

AVERY
I didn't know that.

ABBY
How could you possibly?... They're doing some tests.

AVERY
Ah.
(then)
I'm going to the Caymans tomorrow.

ABBY
Yes. Mitch mentioned it.

AVERY
...Want to come?

ABBY
...What??.

AVERY
I know, I know, it sounds outrageous, but think about it...we can grab some sun, go for a dip, drink Havana Club, I'll give you marital advice... and hit on you... and whatever happens, I promise I take rejection well.

ABBY
What makes you think I need marital advice?

AVERY
Ok, you'll give me marital advice.

ABBY
...I don't scuba dive.

(CONTINUED)

173 CONTINUED: (2) 173

AVERY
Perfect! I can't this time either.

She's surprised, alarmed, but conceals it.

AVERY (CONT'D)
I just found out I had to shorten the trip - some clients coming to town.
(spreads his hands)
So you see...?

ABBY
...Goodbye, Avery -- have a good flight.

She hesitates a moment, turns, walks a few steps, then begins to run. Avery stares after her.

174 INT GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL - LATE AFTERNOON 174

A small packed suitcase. Tammy, phone cradled in her shoulder, cigarette in one hand, red pencil in another. She's checking off names on a list.

TAMMY
Mr. Southerland, as a client of the firm, Mr. McDeere needs to speak to you regarding a very confidential matter that he feels would be to your benefit. How late would it be possible for him to reach you at home?... That's perfect. Thank you.

She hangs up, places a check on the list, is about to dial again when the phone rings.

TAMMY (CONT'D)
Greenwood secretarial--

175 EXT PHONE BOOTH - SCHOOL - ABBY - LATE AFTERNOON 175

Out of breath, agitated:

ABBY
Tammy, this is Abby McDeere. I think you've got a serious problem... Avery's not going diving.

(CONTINUED)

175 CONTINUED: 175

BACK TO TAMMY in HUGE CLOSE UP

TAMMY
Jesus Christ! We're dead.

ABBY closes her eyes.

TAMMY (CONT'D)
(anguished)
How do we...How am I going to let Mitch know? How will I tell him?

Silence. They both struggle.

TAMMY (CONT'D)
...I'm going anyway - I've got to try to do something. My flight's in two hours.

She hangs up. Abby stands for a moment.

176 EXT COUNTRYSIDE - ABBY'S CAR - DAY 176

She stares ahead. Suddenly she pulls over onto the shoulder. She leans her head back for a moment. Then she slams her palm against the steering wheel. She gets out of the car, moves to the roadside phone.

CLOSER ON HER at phone:

ABBY
...Don't tell Mitch anything.

177 EXT DRUGSTORE - NEAR AIRPORT - NIGHT 177

A taxi pulls to a stop. Tammy gets out quickly.

TAMMY
I'll just be a second.

178 INT SMALL DRUGSTORE - NIGHT 178

A few SHOPPERS browse, read magazines. Tammy moves rapidly to the pharmacist.

TAMMY
Prescription for McDeere?

179 INT PRISON - DAY 179

A door opens. Ray McDeere, unescorted walks toward CAMERA, wearing a dark blue suit and white shirt, necktie in hand. Tarrance, waiting for him, signs a release:

INSERT: 'McDeere, Raymond #621334, Agent Wayne Tarrance, FBI, Federal Court Subpoena.'

The Guard with Three hash marks looks with interest.

GUARD
Aren't you going to cuff him?

TARRANCE
I'll take care of it.

The guard shrugs. Tarrance and Ray wait at the heavy door. The BUZZ comes. The door begins to open.

ON RAY'S FACE as it is slowly washed by the daylight.

180 EXT SEVEN MILE BEACH - CAYMANS - TWILIGHT 180

The lights just on in the luxurious condos along the white beach.

181 EXT HYATT - TWILIGHT 181

Across the reflecting pool, into the lobby, where several elegant women move through.

182 EXT POOL BAR - HOTEL - TWILIGHT 182

Avery, drinking rum, chatting up a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN. Suddenly his expression changes.

AVERY'S POV.
Through the sea of bodies is Abby. She's looking straight at Avery. Apprehensive...yet the trace of a smile.

BACK TO AVERY.
As the woman leans toward him speaking softly, he murmurs 'excuse me'. CAMERA COVERS his move to Abby. A moment...

ABBY
You don't seem that surprised.

AVERY
I'm deeply surprised.

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED: 182

ABBY
...So am I.

AVERY
(her drink:)
...What is this?

ABBY
Specialty of the house, he said.

AVERY
Umbrellas are for the rain.
(to waitress)
Two Havana Club, please.

He's moved her to a small table.

AVERY
...How did the tests turn out?

ABBY
We were worried for no reason.

AVERY
...Good.
(then)
I didn't think we got on that well, in the schoolyard.

ABBY
...I've grown up since then.

AVERY
I'd love to believe that.

The drinks arrive. He doesn't take his eyes off her, as he raises his glass. They drink.

ABBY
It's delicious.

AVERY
Isn't it? Like Cognac.
(a beat)
You know I have a bad reputation.

ABBY
What do you do?

AVERY
I run around.

ABBY
...Why do you do that?

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED: (2) 18

AVERY
I think it's because my wife understands me.

Beat of silence. Then all at once:

AVERY (CONT'D)
The fact is I love my wife but she's... I guess she's lost interest in me. I know I have... And I haven't cared for anyone since.
(then)
I'd like to, though. I miss it.

Abby, despite herself is oddly a little moved.

ABBY
My, you lay a lot on a girl, for a first date.

AVERY
...Is that what this is?

They sip their drinks again.

AVERY
It's like cognac, isn't it? -- -- I said that already.

ABBY
Doesn't matter. The words don't matter.

183 INT GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL - CLOSE PHONE - DUSK 18

Ringing. We HEAR the lock turn. The lights are off. The phone rings again. Mitch rushes in, not stopping to turn on the lights. He grabs the phone, jams it to his ear.

MITCH
Yeah--?

VOICE
Guess what I'm looking at?

MITCH
(sags, smiling)
...Tell me.

184 EXT ARKANSAS HIGHWAY - SUNSET 184

Ray on a cellular phone, a short distance from a car pulled over to the side of a road in bg. Richie, the black agent with Tarrance at Doe's, is in the driver's seat. Tarrance sits in the backseat..

RAY
My first sunset in six years.

INTERCUT AS REQUIRED:

MITCH
You made it.

RAY'S VOICE
Oh yeah...I owe you.

MITCH
No you don't.

Mitch is deeply moved. Ray lowers his voice.

RAY
...Anything from Abanks?

MITCH
Last I heard everything was set. It's going to be fine.

RAY
It already is.

MITCH
...Be seeing you, Ray...Give me Tarrance.

Ray turns, walks back to the car, gives Tarrance the phone:

TARRANCE
OK, you spoke to him, now where are the files?

MITCH
Where's the money?

TARRANCE
Not until I get the files.

MITCH
You send half now. When I get confirmation it's there, I'll send the files. I'll trust you for the other half, Wayne.

(CONTINUED)

184 CONTINUED: 184

Click. Mitch has hung up. Tarrance is frustrated, but he has no choice. He hands Ray an envelope.

TARRANCE
Here's some pocket change. You're free, McDeere. Bus stop's a quarter mile.
(points to yellow line)
Follow the line. You're used to that.

185 EXT CAYMANS - POOL BAR - ABBY - NIGHT 185

She's alone at the table. Nervous. Her forehead glistens. There are several empty glasses opposite Avery's place. She reaches into her purse, takes out a small, clear plastic envelope. She looks across the room to:

AVERY, at an hors d'oeuvres table, loading two plates.

ABBY picks up Avery's fresh drink, pours a powder from the envelope into his drink. Her hands are shaking.

AVERY turns with the plates, comes toward CAMERA smiling, a bit unsteady.

ABBY. Her face. Steeling herself.

186 EXT COUNTRYSIDE - GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT 186

Ray's face visible through a window staring out into the night as the bus passes by.

187 EXT POV THROUGH WINDSHIELD - COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT 187

The stern of the Greyhound some distance ahead. Two FBI AGENTS are in the car. One picks up the radio.

AGENT 1
Unit B, we'll be pulling into Five Points at 8:45 for a twenty minute rest stop.

188 EXT FIVE POINTS TRUCK/REST STOP - NIGHT 188

Ray gets off the bus, goes into LUISA'S PLACE. It's obviously a truckers' hangout. A number of eighteen wheeler rigs surround it and the adjacent fuel depot. One Agent gets out of the car and follows Ray.

189 INT LUISA'S PLACE - NIGHT 189

Mostly truckers. A few are uniformed - Bekins, P.I.E., etc. Ray goes to the counter, orders.

RAY
-baby-back pork ribs with Luisa's special sauce...

The agent watches. CAMERA DOLLYS to the huge back of a man. On his coveralls: BLUE ICE CATFISH FARM. HOLD. "Love Me Tender" comes on the juke box and the MAN, a trucker, turns from the stool. He bears an unmistakable resemblance to Elvis--the later, somewhat bloated Elvis. He heads out the front door.

CAMERA DOLLYS back to Ray, who rises, heads to the restroom.

190 INT PRISON - GUARD WITH HASH MARKS - NIGHT 190

He nervously moves into the administration room, toward a fax machine. He doesn't see an ADMINISTRATOR, who looks up, puzzled to see a guard using the fax.

191 INT THE FIRM - A FAX MACHINE - DEVASHER'S OFFICE - NIGHT 191

CLOSE so we read the fax as it emerges: 'Ray McDeere walked under federal subpoena at 14:17 hrs. No cuffs. No destination. No return date." The fax roll is at it's end so the paper curls into a scroll and hits the floor. CAMERA TILTS up to see no one near the desk.

192 EXT REST STOP - GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT 192

HONKING. The passengers are boarding. The Agent in the car begins to get worried. He moves into Luisa's. As he enters, the other AGENT meets his eyes. They both look toward the plate of untouched ribs where Ray sat.

They are galvanized. They rush toward the restroom where they encounter some stiff jostling from SEVERAL LARGE TRUCKERS.

INSIDE the restroom, they rush to the toilets. Tossed into the waste basket is Ray McDeere's blue suit.

193 INT GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL - MITCH - NIGHT 193

Xeroxing billing files. He's working feverishly, sleeves rolled up. A BEEPER goes off. He moves to the phone.

194 INT FBI CASE ROOM - NIGHT 194

Tarrance on phone, Richie watching. INTERCUT:

TARRANCE
What the hell's going on?! We lost your brother.

MITCH
He's not lost, I know exactly where he is -

TARRANCE
Are you trying to fuck with me? where are those files!?

MITCH
You want them - just wire the money. Gotta go Wayne.

195 INT FIRM CONDO - CAYMANS - NIGHT 195

One light on. The door opens. Avery and Abby come in. His eyes are heavy. The drug, coupled with the rum, has slurred his speech.

The bedroom is just off the living room. She hesitates a moment, then boldly walks in. He follows, stands at the door.

There is champagne in a bucket of ice. Abby moves toward it.

ABBY
Hasn't even begun to melt.

AVERY
The staff is chosen for it's timing.

He moves up behind her, puts his arms around her from behind. She stops. He turns her face sideways, and kisses her.

His hands move up and begin undoing the buttons of her blouse. She closes her eyes.

He's unbuttoned the three buttons, and pulls the blouse out of the skirt. Still standing behind her, he slides the blouse off her shoulders and lets it fall.

She's wearing a camisole. He reaches for the delicate straps, but she turns quickly - begins to undo the buttons on his shirt. He watches, trying to focus.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: 195

AVERY
I would do that...but I could never do that. The buttons are too small... it requires terrible deskerity... destremit-

ABBY
-Dexterity.

AVERY
Amazing.

He reaches again to the straps of the camisole. She allows him to pull them down, pull it down - but she can't completely hide how difficult it is for her.

He stares at her through the booze-drug-haze. Then his hands tighten around her wrists by her side.

AVERY (CONT'D)
What are you doing here?

ABBY
...what do you mean?

AVERY
I mean what exactly did you come here for?

ABBY
...I thought I was invited.

AVERY
You're not being truthful.

ABBY
Why are you doing this?

AVERY
...Because I'm sick to death of lies -- I want you to tell me the truth.

ABBY
(a beat)
I came here to punish Mitch for letting the Firm ruin our lives. I came because when he was here with you... he slept with someone else... Is that what you wanted to hear?

He breathes in, then sinks heavily to the edge of the bed.

(CONTINUED)

195 CONTINUED: (2) 195

AVERY
--Yeah...better than the alternative...

ABBY
What alternative?

AVERY
...That you came here to see me.

Despite herself - surprised at herself - she reaches out, touches Avery's cheek. He takes hold of her hand, pulls her down toward him. He kisses her. She allows it. His eyes open. For a fleeting moment he's aware of what's happening.

She pushes him gently back on the bed - and he's out.

She slides the camisole back up onto her shoulders.

She reaches down, hesitates only a moment, and begins to pull his trousers off.

HER HANDS on the keyring. They shake and she scatters the keys on the rug as she grabs the UNIVAC key.

THE PHONE as her hands pick it up.

196 EXT THE CONDO - NIGHT 196

Abby comes out carrying one of the 'Moroco' boxes.

197 EXT HOTEL PORTICO - ABBY - NIGHT 197

She rounds a corner, comes through an archway, down a palm lined path and goes into the hotel complex.

198 INT HOTEL - ABBY - NIGHT 198

She enters the hallway, moves to a hotel doorway, fumbles for a key. The door is yanked open and Tammy is there, helping her into the room. There is a Xerox machine in the middle of the floor.

199 INT FIRM - DEVASHER'S OFFICE - NIGHT 199

Devasher, in a foul mood, having been awakened, listens as A TECHNICIAN plays back a tape. The phone-sound is <u>echo-y</u>.

(CONTINUED)

199 CONTINUED: 199

ABBY'S VOICE
(whispering)
-You sure he'll be all right?

TAMMY'S VOICE
What the fuck do you want to do, call 911?- get the key, grab the stuff and get over here.

Devasher switches off the tape. He's furious.

DEVASHER
Keep phoning him. Wake the son of a bitch up and tell him to hang on to that girl! Great sound, by the way -

He kicks the desk which holds the fax machine. Beneath his feet is the curled up fax sent by the prison guard -- but he's too preoccupied to see.

200 EXT FIVE POINTS - DEPOT & LUISA'S DINER - NIGHT 200

The TWO AGENTS who lost Ray are at the cashier's booth going through stacks of fuel receipt credit card slips.

201 INT GREENWOOD ASSOCIATES - MITCH - NIGHT 201

On phone.

MITCH
#6194408S...and could you confirm that it's seven hundred fifty thousand?

202 INT FIRM CONDO - STORAGE ROOM - CAYMANS - NIGHT 202

Abby returns a box of files. She picks up another when the phone suddenly RINGS! She freezes. Listens. It continues to ring.

203 INT HOTEL ROOM - TAMMY - NIGHT 203

Abby enters with another box of files. Tammy Xeroxing, on the phone, raises her finger to her lips. Abby stands still listening:

TAMMY
-absolutely, we're getting it packed up now....

204 INT GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL - MITCH - NIGHT 204

Shirtsleeves. Haggard. Looks at his watch.

MITCH
You're running late aren't you?

INTERCUT AS NEEDED:

TAMMY
Well, not exactly, there was a little hitch--

MITCH
What hitch?

TAMMY
It's nothing - we got it done- that's what counts--did you get everything you need?

MITCH
Almost. I need some stuff out of Avery's computer. I'll get it first thing in the morning.

TAMMY
(worried)
Why go back in there Mitch? what if they find the time sheets missing? what if Avery wakes up on the wrong side of the bed?

205 EXT MEMPHIS AIRPORT - NIGHT 205

The Firm's LEARJET, one engine running, waits as the Nordic runs toward it. The Squat Man already inside.

206 EXT CAYMANS - FIRST LIGHT 206

The sun is just beginning to glow in the dark horizon.

207 INT HOTEL ROOM - CAYMANS - NIGHT/DAWN 207

Abby and Tammy, exhausted, finishing. Tammy hands the last box back to Abby.

TAMMY
OK, that's it. Get the goddamn key back in his pants and get out of there - I gotta get these to the boat.

(CONTINUED)

207 CONTINUED: 207

ABBY
--the boat???

TAMMY
Just go!he's gonna wake up!

208 EXT CONDO - NIGHT/DAWN 208

The sky ever-lightening. Abby hauls the last file case up the stairs into the condo.

209 INT CONDO - STORAGE ROOM - ABBY - DAWN 209

She replaces the file. The phone starts to RING again! She hurries. She closes the door, locks it. She starts toward the bedroom with the key. But she hears Avery's raspy voice:

AVERY'S VOICE
...Hello..?

She freezes, looks around frantically, looks at the key.

AVERY'S VOICE(CONT'D)
...you'll have to repeat that...

She looks toward the bedroom, sees Avery's trousers over the chair. There's no way to reach them. She must make a decision. She moves quickly toward the bathroom, enters from the hall entrance.

IN THE BEDROOM, Avery remains on the phone, his eyes slowly reacting to what he's hearing. His face is clammy and drained of color. He looks in great pain.

AVERY
...not possible.

DEVASHER'S VOICE
She stole your keys and God knows what else--

Avery tries to move his head to see his trousers.

DEVASHER'S VOICE
They're just landing, they'll be there in ten minutes. She better be there.

There's a CLICK. Avery manages to get his head off the pillow. He spots loose change and a couple of keys scattered on the rug near his trousers.

(CONTINUED)

209 CONTINUED: 209

IN THE BATHROOM, Abby has undressed and is putting on a white Terrycloth robe. She puts the UNIVAC key in the pocket.

IN THE BEDROOM, Avery lies still, his arm dangling off the side of the bed as Abby enters. She tries to smile as she sits on the edge of the bed. Avery's eyes never leave her.

ABBY
Quite a night..I guess.

She glances over at his trousers. There's no choice but to untie the robe and --

AVERY
--Don't...

Abby looks at him, stopped.

AVERY (CONT'D)
...They heard you...on the phone... keys... files... they're coming.

She's horrified, stares at him.

AVERY (CONT'D)
...go...go...

210 EXT OWEN ROBERTS AIRPORT - CAYMANS - EARLY DAWN 210

A van, carrying the Nordic, the Squat Man and TWO OTHER MEN pulls out onto the highway. The LEARJET visible in bg.

211 INT FIRM CONDO - AVERY AND ABBY - DAWN 211

Abby, rushing, struggles into her heels by the bed. Avery's eyes are closed.

AVERY
Abby?... the girl was a setup.

She stops, looks at him.

AVERY (CONT'D)
..on the beach, she was a setup.
...they did it...

She's still.

AVERY (CONT'D)
...go!

(CONTINUED)

211 CONTINUED: 211

ABBY
Will you be all right?

AVERY
-go, Abby...go on.

She starts to say more, but can't -- she goes quickly.

212 INT THE FIRM - DEVASHER'S OFFICE - EARLY MORNING 212

Devasher paces back and forth glancing out the window. A TECHNICIAN passes by.

DEVASHER
Did they call?

TECHNICIAN
Not yet.

DEVASHER
What are they doing down there?

At that moment the fax machine begins BEEPING.

213 EXT/INT - DEVASHER'S POV - OMIT 213

214 INT DEVASHER'S OFFICE - OMIT 214

215 INT THE FIRM CONDO - CAYMANS - MORNING 215

The door bursts open and the Nordic and ANOTHER MAN burst in.

216 INT TAMMY'S HOTEL ROOM - CAYMANS - MORNING 216

The Squat Man and A SECOND MAN burst in. Only the Xerox machine, still purring, and an empty room.

217 INT DEVASHER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 217

CLOSE on the fax machine. The display blinks: 'Out of Paper'. Devasher's feet come into shot.

DEVASHER'S VOICE
What the hell's the matter with you people! Jesus H. Christ!

Then his hands reach down, from above CAMERA and pick up the curled up fax.

218 EXT THE FIRM - MITCH - MORNING 218

coming from the Cotton Exchange, he's crossing the alley between the Firm and the Parking structure. He's haggard, unshaven.

There is a LARGE TRUCK loaded with huge cotton bales parked in the allyway, blocking it. Dutch is having a fit trying to get the driver to move it.

DRIVER
I ain't going nowhere until the supervisor gets here - the transmission's stuck - so just cool down, Bubba.

Mitch enters the building.

219 INT DEVASHER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS - MORNING 219

He holds the fax, livid and frightened at the same time.

DEVASHER
Check every goddamn floor. Find McDeere! The sonofabitch cut a deal.

220 INT FIRM - PARTNERS FLOOR - DAY 220

Mitch steps off the elevator, trying not to look rumpled. He moves quickly to Avery's secretary.

MITCH
Madge, could you open Avery's office for me? right away.

She hesitates, puzzled.

MITCH(CONT'D)
Didn't he speak to you? he needs some work done on the Hemmba papers before ten.

221 INT FBI OFFICE - ACTIVE CASE ROOM - DAY 221

Maps of Arkansas and Tennessee pinned on the wall. The TWO AGENTS who lost Ray are still going over fuel receipts. Tarrance, wrecked, drinks coffee. Richie answers the phone.

AGENT 1
Natisin, Earlywine, Hemphill-

(CONTINUED)

221 CONTINUED: 22

RICHIE
Warden Dynehart from Brushy Mountain Prison--

Richie holds phone out to Tarrance. As Tarrance reaches:

TARRANCE
-Hemphill? Wait a minute -- Lomax's secretary--

WARDEN'S VOICE
Wayne, I've just been questioning a guard who sent an unauthorized fax to a law firm in Memphis. I gather it was in regard to your prisoner.

Tarrance drops the phone, grabs another, jabs at the dial.

TARRANCE
No,no,no,no,no,no,no,no!

222 INT THE FIRM - AVERY'S OFFICE - MITCH - DAY 22

standing behind Avery's desk, watching the laser printer, slowly expel pages.

223 THE FIRM - ELEVATOR - DAY 22

A UNIFORMED GUARD reaches inside with a key, turns off the elevator. The lights go out.

224 AVERY'S OFFICE - MITCH 224

He folds the four pages he has, waits for the last page to finish printing.

225 NINA'S DESK - NINA 225

on the phone.

NINA
...No, he's not in his office, your honor, I'll see if he's in the building.

226 OUTSIDE AVERY'S OFFICE 226

Mitch comes out, carrying the pages.

(CONTINUED)

226 CONTINUED: 22

OLIVER'S VOICE
Mitch?...we were just looking for you.

Mitch turns. At the end of the corridor, Oliver stands in his office doorway. Behind him McKnight and Locke, solemn.

OLIVER(CONT'D)
Could you step in here?

At that moment, Madge, Avery's secretary says into the phone:

MADGE
Yes, he's right here, Nina, transfer him.
(to Mitch)
A Judge Tarrance for you?

On Mitch's shocked face. He moves to the phone. As he takes it, Devasher comes out of the stairwell and moves toward him, carrying a walkie-talkie. Mitch picks up the phone.

MITCH
...Hello?...

TARRANCE'S VOICE
Get out of there! They know- get out!

Mitch holds the phone, thinking feverishly. Devasher continues toward him.

TARRANCE'S VOICE(CONT'D)
Did you hear what I said? get out and get over here!

MITCH
...I understand.

He hangs up. He slowly folds the papers, placing them inside his jacket, gauging the narrowing gap between him and Devasher. In the bg. OLIVER'S SECRETARY can be heard giving Dutch authority to have the Cotton Truck towed.

When Devasher is barely a stride away, Mitch bolts past him and into the stairwell. Devasher moves calmly after him.

227 INT FIRM - SECOND FLOOR - STAIRWAY EXIT - DAY 227

Mitch bursts down the stairs, heads purposefully towards:

228 INT DUNBAR'S OFFICE 228

Dunbar looks up mildly surprised as Mitch bursts in.

DUNBAR
Mitch - what can I do you for?
Have a seat.

Mitch picks up one of the heavy leather chairs in front of Dunbar's desk and HEAVES it out the wondow. It explodes like a bomb. Kicking away the glass, Mitch looks down on the alley. Twelve feet below him is the Cotton Truck. He jumps.

229 EXT FIRM - ALLEY - DAY 229

Mitch hits the cotton bales. He's stunned for a moment, then rolls off, hits the asphalt wobbly, but on his feet, and runs.

230 EXT FIRM - WINDOW - DEVASHER - DAY 230

using his walkie-talkie, giving instructions. TWO UNIFORMED GUARDS round the corner into the alley.

231 INT FBI CASE ROOM - TARRANCE & RICHIE - DAY 231

Tarrance is on the phone.

TARRANCE
...Well what direction was he
running?

Richie picks up another RINGING phone. He taps Tarrance.

TARRANCE(CONT'D)
Just a fucking minute-

RICHIE
-It's McDeere.

232 INT CITY HALL - POV FROM MEZZANINE - DAY 232

looking down on the lobby and out the windows. PULL BACK to reveal Mitch at a payphone.

TARRANCE'S VOICE
Where are you?

MITCH
Never mind - what happened?

(CONTINUED)

232 CONTINUED: 232

INTERCUT AS NEEDED.

TARRANCE
It's OK!- I'll send a car- just come on in - I'll tell you when you get here--

MITCH
Tell me now.

TARRANCE
It was a prison guard - just - come on in. We'll place you in protective custody-

MITCH
-Somehow you don't make me feel protected-

TARRANCE
-Are you looking to get whacked? You know what's going on here? The Moroltos are arriving today, I got their itinerary --

EXTREME CLOSE - MITCH, - stunned.

MITCH
--What??

TARRANCE
-The Moroltos are coming here - Memphis - this afternoon! I'm looking at their itinerary; Northwest arrives 3:42 -- straight to the Peabody. Now, goddamnit the whole world is going to be looking for you - you can't go home, you can't go back there, now get in here!

MITCH
(looks at watch)
I've got... to get lost for a few hours, Wayne, I got an appointment later. Have to call you back.

233 EXT CITY HALL - DAY 233

Just across the street is the Mud Island tram. Mitch puts his head down, quickly crosses and is lost in the continuous STREAM OF TOURISTS climbing the stairs to the tram.

234 INT THE FIRM - OLIVER'S OFFICE - DAY 234

Devasher is on the phone. Locke, McKnight and Oliver sit in stony silence.

DEVASHER
...I knew they wouldn't find her. Get 'em back on the plane. I need them here now.
(hangs up)
If we don't get McDeere before he gives what he's got to the feds...

235 INT FBI - CASE ROOM - DAY 235

Richie and the TWO AGENTS watch a high speed dot matrix printer spew out truck registrations. Tarrance is on the phone.

VOYLES' VOICE
He's withholding evidence! As far as I'm concerned he's a fugitive and I want him brought in! Use the Memphis police if you have to, but get him!

Tarrance hangs up as Richie picks up the report.

RICHIE
It's an 18-wheeler. Blue Ice Catfish Farm.

TARRANCE
Get its routes. Issue an APB on Ray and Mitchell McDeere.

236 INT/EXT MUD ISLAND TRAM - DAY 236

crossing the Mississippi a hundred feet above the water. It's a 90 second ride from Memphis to Mud Island, loaded with TOURISTS and Mitch. The returning Tram to Memphis passes them, tourists from both waving gaily through the wide windows.

237 EXT MUD ISLAND - RIVER MUSEUM - DAY 237

Mitch looks at his watch as he buys an admission ticket.

238 INT MUSEUM - UNDERGROUND - DAY 238

As Mitch, with OTHER TOURISTS, listens to the GUIDE take him through the origins of the Mississippi. He is nervous, edgy, tries to keep his head down. The GUIDE talks on --

(CONTINUED)

238 CONTINUED: 238

Through the CROWD OF TOURISTS, Kay Quinn is suddenly visible. RELATIVES in tow, CHILDREN whining, she spots Mitch through the mass of bodies. She's puzzled. She looks at her watch. She raises her hand to wave but he's gone. She's pulled away by the fretful children.

239 INT MCDEERE HOME - DAY 239

Being ripped apart by TWO MEN searching.

240 EXT PIER - MISSISSIPPI RIVER - DAY 240

Somewhere south of Memphis. A BLUE ICE CATFISH FARM rig is parked in fg. A SECOND RIG is adjacent to it.

Ray, in Blue Ice Catfish uniform descends a ramp to the floating dock where a SEAPLANE marked Abanks Diving, Grand Cayman is moored.

The plane door opens and Abby gets out. She and Ray, small figures, embrace. Ray gets into the seaplane as Abby moves up the ramp.

The Blue Ice rig pulls away.

The DRIVER of the SECOND RIG holds the door open, politely, for Abby.

241 INT MUD ISLAND RIVER MUSEUM - DAY 241

Mitch has moved from early settlers along the Mississippi, to river transportation - to music.

242 EXT STREET - PAYPHONE - DAY 242

Kay Quinn, relatives in tow is on the phone to Lamar.

KAY
..well, the kids wanted me to bring them by...why? what's the matter?...Ok, Oh! I just saw Mitch at the Mud Island Museum, zipping through like a tourist-

243 INT MUSEUM - MITCH - GIFT SHOP AREA 243

Mitch on the phone.

244 INT ABANKS DIVING LODGE - BARRY ABANKS - DAY 244

INTERCUT:

MITCH
How are my friends?

ABANKS
Ok. Ray's on the plane and Tammy's here with the stuff.

Out the Abanks window, a 60 foot ketch is tied at the dock. The BOXES WITH THE XEROXED FILES are being taken aboard.

MITCH
It worked out...

ABANKS
Yes and no... Your lawyer friend is dead.

Mitch freezes.

ABANKS (CONT'D)
He was never on the boat. He cancelled the charter.

MITCH
What?

ABANKS
He drowned. But in his bathtub. After the lady left.

MITCH
What lady? how did you get --?

ABANKS
--I don't know, a lady friend of Tammy's slipped him some kind of Mickey Finn. I gather it was someone he'd been enamored of for quite a while -

Tammy comes into the shop.

MITCH
What are you talking about?? Who the hell was it?

ABANKS
(to Tammy)
Mitch is asking about your friend. Abby? isn't that her name?

(CONTINUED)

244 CONTINUED: 24

Tammy throws her hands to her face, as Abanks holds the phone out to her. She takes it, slowly.

TAMMY
...Mitch?

MITCH
(very grim)
Where is she? What the hell are you talking about?

245 EXT MEMPHIS AIRPORT - DAY 24

A Delta Flight is landing.

246 INT TERMINAL - AIRPORT - DAY 24

The Morolto brothers, TONY the panther, and JOEY the lion, come out surrounded by an ENTOURAGE. They are greeted by Devasher. They are not pleased.

247 EXT/INT TRAM - DAY 24

begins its return from Mud Island. Mitch can be seen through the windows, still and somber.

WIDE VIEW as the returning tram is passing, easing into the dock.

FROM MITCH'S TRAM, as the opposite tram passes, we SEE the face of the Nordic, close against the window, spotting Mitch.

248 EXT MUD ISLAND - TRAM DOCKING - DAY 24

The tram doors open, and the Nordic bursts out and up the stairs.

249 EXT PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY - OVER THE TRAM - DAY 24

The Nordic reaches the top of the stairs and begins to sprint across the 5/8 of a mile leg back.

250 INT TRAM 25

Mitch. Trying to digest it all, unaware of the Nordic.

251 EXT - TIE-UP SHOT 251

The tram moving below the archway, the small figure of the Nordic, a good distance behind, sprinting above the archway.

252 EXT MEMPHIS - TRAM ARRIVAL - DAY 252

The doors open and Mitch, in a flood of people, disembarks. He's slowed by the crowd but moves forward.

PAN WITH HIM as he takes us past the still face of a man. It's the Squat Man, who moves forward behind Mitch.

THE STAIRCASE as the Squat Man, limping slightly, follows very closely behind Mitch. Follow them down ONE FLIGHT.

THE SECOND FLIGHT, as they continue, bumped and slowed by the crowd. Despite the limp, the Squat Man sticks close to Mitch.

253 EXT TRAMWAY - NEAR STREET 253

Mitch comes forward, ready to cross the street. The Squat Man is like glue. Nearing the curb, Mitch notices two POLICEMAN going through the wallet of a young handsome, MAN, with dark hair, dressed in a business suit.

Mitch turns at right angles, trying to move away, but approaching, in the boulevard are two MEMPHIS POLICE CARS.

It forces Mitch to turn back toward the stairs. The Squat Man turns with him.

ON THE STAIRS, Mitch is moving up toward the tram. He glances over his shoulder to check the police cars. What registers is the rhythmic gait of the limping Squat man.

MITCH CONTINUES to the landing, but as he turns to go up the next flight, he continues his turn, and in one fluid motion KICKS at the injured leg of the Squat man, sending him toppling down the stairs.

THE CROWD near Mitch is stunned. He wants to disappear quickly. He looks up toward the flight above him and spots The Nordic, breathing heavily, coming down the stairs.

MITCH IS in motion back down the flight he just came up. Halfway down he vaults the railing and hits the ground running.

254 EXT RIVERFRONT STREET - TRAVELLING - DAY 254

With Mitch as he races away, the winded Nordic in pursuit.

255 EXT BUILDING - DAY 2

Mitch turns at right angles and races into the parking lot.

ON THE STREET, Devasher's car passes on the way to the Mud Island Tram. He spots Mitch running into the parking lot, hits the brakes, and makes a U-turn.

CAMERA PANS WITH U-TURN to reveal the Nordic approaching fast.

PARKING LOT as Mitch races through. A MAINTENANCE CREW opens the fire door, carrying out some garbage. Mitch, unaware that Devasher has spotted him, bolts into the building.

ON THE STREET, Devasher SHOUTS to the Nordic .

256 INT BUILDING - STAIRWELL - MITCH 25

climbing the fire stairs two and three at a time.

THE NORDIC is racing up the stairwell three flights behind Mitch. He draws a SILENCED gun, carefully fires a shot that richochets off the concrete.

DEVASHER stands below, says quietly, 'Save it. He's got nowhere to go but the roof.'

WITH MITCH scrambling up the last flight. He hits the FIRE EXIT door and opens it.

257 EXT BUILDING ROOF - POV - DAY 25

A flat roof with virtually nowhere to hide.

MITCH turns back to see the Nordic racing upwards below him. He looks to the wall. A FIRE ALARM, and next to it, a thick canvas fire hose on a wheel, with a heavy brass handle.

He frantically pulls the wheel out from the wall and drops the hose into the stairwell. He waits, and when the Nordic is coming up the last flight toward him he pulls the FIRE ALARM, and --

Grabs the hose, sliding down it, using his feet to anchor him, and to keep him away from the walls.

The surprised Nordic tries to get off a shot, but Mitch is a blur as he drops past him. THE ALARM IS SCREECHING.

The Nordic stows his weapon, grabs the hose and begins to slide down after Mitch.

Two flights go smoothly, then SUDDENLY the Nordic is slashed across the face with Mitch's belt, as he passes Mitch standing on the stairs. The Nordic loosens his grip momentarily, and slides too fast, out of control.

Mitch grabs the rope and swings it hard.

Below, the Nordic careens into a wall, lets go - plummets down, slams into the bottom of the stairwell.

Devasher sees the Maintenance Crew rushing toward the building, drawn by the Alarm. He moves quickly out.

258 INT PEABODY HOTEL - SUITE - TONY AND JOEY MOROLTO - DAY 258

Tony, on phone, in shirt and tie, paces the suite seething.

TONY
(into phone, coolly)
Of course I can talk. Why, isn't that what I'm doing? I mean if it's something else, please advise me Maury. I always like to learn something I don't know at five hundred dollars an hour-
(cups his hand over the phone)
I tell you Joey, every fucking lawyer on the face of the earth oughta be killed.

Joey is calmer. He sits on the sofa, his feet on a coffee table. He downs an espresso in one gulp.

TONY (CONT'D)
-you're going to what,? You want to meet with him? what for? so the two of you can charge me a thousand dollars an hour before they send me to Joliet for thirty years? Let's not fart around Maury. This kid's cut a deal and he knows how to do it. After all-
(viciously)
-he's my lawyer.

He slams the phone down, turns to his brother.

TONY (CONT'D)
Jusus, Mary, Mother of God if only I could get my hands on this kid-

Their secretary RUTH, middle-aged and pleasant, but firm, appears in the doorway. Tony waves her off.

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED: 258

RUTH
I think it's urgent, Mr. Morolto.

Tony turns to his brother and smiles.

TONY
Ruth thinks it's urgent, Joey.
What do you think?

RUTH
It's a Mr. McDeere. Mr. Mitchell
McDeere. He's waiting to see you.

The longest pause in the movie.

JOEY
I think Ruth is right.

She leaves. Joey and Tony look at one another.

JOEY(CONT'D)
Sometimes, Tony -

TONY
Sometimes what?

But Mitch stands in the doorway. He's pulled himself together fairly well, but a few scrapes are showing.

The second longest pause in the movie.

MITCH
I'm Mitch McDeere...I'm your attorney.
One of them anyway.

Both men nod. Barely.

MITCH(CONT'D)
I assumed you knew...but I thought
I'd mention it...in case.

Mitch clears his throat. He's tired. The two men he's facing look rested and fit as wild cats.

MITCH(CONT'D)
Well, I guess I should try to get
started. I'll try not to take up
too much of your time.

Tony is still pacing, behind Mitch now, and it clearly makes him uncomfortable.

JOEY
Would you care to sit down?

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED: (2) 258

MITCH
Not really. I want to try and -- this is just very awkward.

The brothers never take their eyes off Mitch - Tony pacing, Joey motionless.

MITCH(CONT'D)
I'm afraid - my firm - has behaved in an unethical manner.

He waits for a question. Some word. Nothing. They wait.

MITCH(CONT'D)
It seems that - we - Bendini, Lambert and Locke, the entire firm has been engaged in a - well a conspiracy. We've been -
(a breath)
- overbilling our clients.

The brothers for the first time take their eyes off Mitch and look at each other. Just as if Joey had asked him, Tony stops pacing. He walks over to the couch and sits down next to his brother. The two men look up at Mitch.

MITCH(CONT'D)
- in some cases massive overbilling. I assure you I had no idea any of this was going on when I joined the firm.

Mitch waits for a reaction. The two man just look at him.

MITCH(CONT'D)
Well I feel that I have to report this criminal behavior, but I can't use your invoices without your written authorization.

TONY
Our invoices?

JOEY
(gently)
Please, Tony. Listen.

MITCH
Your bills. You see, it's an important part of the proof that we've overbilled you.

JOEY
That's it?

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED: (3) 258

MITCH
Pretty much. Most of our clients have agreed to allow me to turn their bills over to the government.

JOEY
Most of your clients.

MITCH
Pretty much all. Except for you. Which is why I'm here.

JOEY
You want us to let you turn our bills -

MITCH
- what we charged you, I should say overcharged you -

JOEY
-over to the government.

MITCH
Yes sir.

JOEY
...Now does that -

MITCH
No sir, it does not in any way -

There is a change in Mitch's tone. Still respectful, but someone with a strong point of view.

MITCH(CONT'D)
-waive your rights to full and complete confidentiality in any other area of the attorney-client relationship.
(pause)
I'm your lawyer...Tony.. whether I like it or not. I can't talk to the government about you even when I'm no longer your lawyer. That would be breaking my word and my oath.
(then)
...I know what that...I did that once. I'm not going to do it again.

Tony looks to Joey, then leans forward, elbows on knees.

(CONTINUED)

258 CONTINUED: (4) 258

TONY
Okay, Mitch. What about stealing our files and Xeroxing them? What the fuck was that all about?

MITCH
The files in the Caymans haven't been stolen. They are in exactly the same place they were. Whatever I know, wherever I go, I'm bound by the attorney-client privilege. I'm very much like, I would say exactly like, a ship carrying a cargo that will never reach any port. And as long as I'm alive that ship will always be at sea, so to speak.

The brothers get the picture.

JOEY
Like Yasser-fucking-Arafat, never a night in the same place - so to speak.

At that moment, Ruth enters again.

RUTH
I'm sorry, but there's a call for Mr. McDeere.

Mitch looks at his watch, looks at the brothers, who nod very slightly. Mitch picks up the phone.

MITCH
Hello...just a minute.

He holds the phone to his chest, looks at Joey and Tony.

MITCH(CONT'D)
Excuse me Gentlemen, I'm afraid I need your answer.

TONY
...You got this authorization with you?

MITCH
Yessir.

JOEY
(a slight sigh)
Where do we sign?

MITCH
(into phone)
Make the call, Tammy.

259 EXT COTTON EXCHANGE - LATE AFTERNOON 259

A phalanx of FBI cars and a PLAIN TRUCK arrive in front of the building. Tarrance leads a detail, several men with furniture dollies, inside the building.

260 INT GREENWOOD SECRETARIAL - LATE AFTERNOON 260

The door opens. The men with furniture dollies all pour in. Tarrance comes forward.

There is nothing but a small stack of xeroxed pages, carefully placed under a lamp.

The men look to Tarrance, who moves slowly toward the tiny stack of pages.

261 EXT ABANKS DIVING - CAYMANS - LATE AFTERNOON 261

The Ketch is ready to cast off. Ray is on the boat staring at Tammy while he listens.

TAMMY
You got the account number? you know how to access it, you've got the--

RAY
(quietly)
--I love your tits.

She stops, smiles at him.

262 INT MCDEERE HOUSE - EARLY EVENING. 262

Mitch enters, haggard, exhausted. He surveys the debris left by Devasher's men.

He moves through the disorder to the bedroom.

263 INT BEDROOM - EARLY EVENING 263

A mess. Mitch takes a small suitcase from the closet, begins to throw a few things into it. The SOUND of a car SCREECHING to a stop. He hesitates, then continues packing.

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED: 263

TARRANCE'S VOICE
Where the hell are you?

Tarrance appears in the bedroom doorway, holding the small folder of papers Mitch left him.

TARRANCE (CONT'D)
You sonofabitch, I ask for crooks, you give me their accountants! You let the Moroltos off the hook--

MITCH
(packing)
--They were my clients.

TARRANCE
They were the crooks!

MITCH
What would you call the Firm?

TARRANCE
A bunch of chickenshit lawyers who padded their bills--

MITCH
You been with the Bureau too long, you're a "G" man, Tarrance, you want Dillinger. There's a whole bunch of <u>new</u> bad guys - with expensive haircuts and terriffic manners.

TARRANCE
That's double talk! - you made a deal to save your ass-

MITCH
--That's the way it started-

TARRANCE
-you were <u>this close</u> to being one of them!-

MITCH
--that's right. They invited me in and I jumped. They counted on me not to ask too many questions, and they were right. When you're greedy, you're predictable, and I was greedy.

Tarrance holds out the papers.

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED: (2) 263

TARRANCE
What good is this shit going to do me?

MITCH
Without the firm, the only way the Moroltos can launder money is in a washing machine. They'll be out of business.

TARRANCE
Yeah? when? - all I see is you made out pretty good. You got our money, you're still a hot-shot lawyer -- and you're out of this.

Mitch has finished packing. He picks up the suitcase, turns to Tarrance.

MITCH
The money was always for someone else. Yeah, I'm a lawyer -- with refrences from Bendini, Lambert and Locke. You want to put that in your resumé?

He starts past Tarrance, but turns and stops.

MITCH(CONT'D)
And what if one of those guys tries to make a deal?-- they probably will -- that's what they do for a living, isn't it? He'll testify against the Moroltos in exchange for immunity. You think I'm ever going to turn the ignition key of my car without sweating.

He walks into the other room. Tarrance follows.

IN THE DINING ROOM, Mitch puts the suitcase down, goes to a shelf where he keeps cassettes. Tarrance enters.

TARRANCE
Then what the fuck did you do it for? You didn't win a thing.

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED: (3) 263

MITCH
(quietly)
Yeah I did. I won my life back. You don't run me...and they don't run me.
(then)
And you want to know something weird? I discovered the law again. You actually made me think about it. I managed to get through 3 years of law school without doing that.

Tarrance shakes his head, starts to leave.

MITCH
Tarrance?

Tarrance turns. Mitch tosses him a mini-cassette.

MITCH(CONT'D)
It's you at the dog track. I could've gone public with it.

TARRANCE
Why didn't you?

MITCH
...It's against the law.
(then)
You ought to play it back a few times before you get rid of it.

Suddenly, the pad of paws on the floor, and Hearsay comes over to Mitch. Mitch grows pale. He whirls, and sees Abby entering. They look at one another. Then to Tarrance:

MITCH
Anything else?

TARRANCE
Yeah...the justice dept has asked me to congatulate you for handing them the biggest mail fraud case in the last 20 years.

He nods to Abby, goes. A long beat as Abby looks at Mitch.

ABBY
Well...you've had a busy day.
(at his silence)
Why didn't you tell me what your real plan was?

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED: (4) 26

MITCH
I knew you'd worry about me... and that might make you stay... and I knew you needed to leave.

She looks at him, moved. But then she looks around the room.

ABBY
I like what you've done to the place.

Mitch almost smiles.

MITCH
I thought you were going to your folks.

ABBY
I was.

MITCH
...Some detour.

ABBY
(long look)
...yeah.
(re his suitcase)
Where you going?

MITCH
To look for you.
(then)
Why'd you do it, Abby?

ABBY
...I guess I didn't feel I could leave you without trying to help you... Are you sorry?

MITCH
...Did you do it <u>for</u> me...or <u>to</u> me?

ABBY
Both, I guess.

MITCH
Well, I'm grateful. And impressed. It took a lot of guts. I...thank you.

ABBY
(quietly)
...And...?

(CONTINUED)

263 CONTINUED: (5) 263

MITCH
(agonized)
I don't really feel I have a right to ask you anything else and besides... I'd be afraid to ask anyway.

He turns, leans on the dining room table. Abby moves up to him. She's at his back, clearly hesitant about touching him.

ABBY
I'll tell you exactly what happened.

MITCH
(without turning)
OK...Whatever you think I should know.

ABBY
I think you should know that Avery was...pretty decent. He was...tormented...unhappy. It's what happened to him. And it might have happened to you. You might have begun to drink...and run around. And lost me.

He turns.

MITCH
...Did I lose you?

She studies him.

ABBY
You look tired.

He returns her gaze...then nods.

ABBY(CONT'D)
...I love what you did, Mitch. And why you did it. I always loved you but...part of it was...like a promise, and you kept your promise.

Mitch slowly takes her in his arms.

264 EXT MCDEERE HOUSE - VERY HIGH ANGLE - DAY 264

The old Mazda, with a U-Haul attached. Mitch, Abby and Hearsay, small figures, get in.

MITCH
You think it'll make it?

ABBY
...make it <u>where</u>?

MITCH
...Boston?

They drive off -- exactly as they had arrived.

ABBY'S VOICE
What's in Boston?

MITCH'S VOICE
<u>We</u> are...

ABBY'S VOICE
And the Wong Boys...

265 EXT - SOMEWHERE IN THE CARIBBEAN - DAY 265

The Ketch riding the beautiful sea. Ray and Tammy on deck.

ABBY'S VOICE
And my kids.

MITCH'S VOICE
And a very small, unknown, law firm...

266 EXT - AERIAL SHOT - HIGHWAY 266

The car and U-haul tiny on the long ribbon of highway.

ABBY'S VOICE
-- with a lot of potential.

MITCH'S VOICE
Yeah...

THE END.